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NOVEMBER 1999

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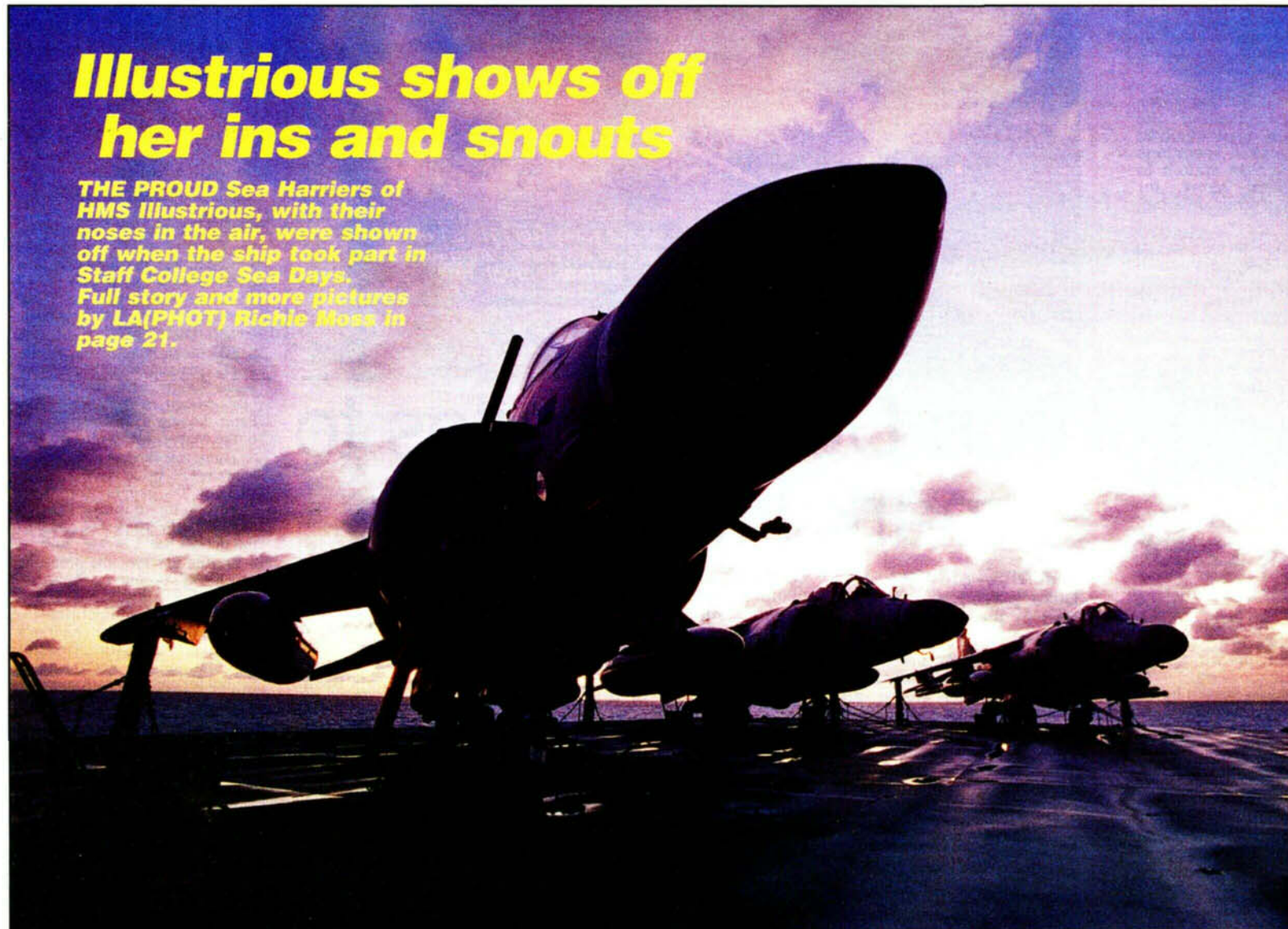
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WIN TWO CHILDREN'S VIDEOS p28

GAYS: PLEDGE ON SERVICE VIEWS

Illustrious shows off her ins and snouts

THE PROUD Sea Harriers of HMS Illustrious, with their noses in the air, were shown off when the ship took part in Staff College Sea Days. Full story and more pictures by LA(PHOT) Richie Moss in page 21.



AN ASSURANCE has been given by the Ministry of Defence that the views of Service people will be fully taken into account by the team reviewing the Armed Forces policy on homosexuals.

The team began its work after a ruling by the European Court of Human Rights that the treatment of four former members of the Armed Forces, who were sacked as homosexuals, had breached their human rights.

The four include ex-RN officer Duncan Lustig-Prean and former rating John Beckett.

The Government accepted the judgment and immediately suspended its current policy of banning homosexuals from serving in the Armed Forces.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence said the policy review team included representatives of each of the three Services to ensure that the opinions of the Armed Forces were taken into account.

The group will consult closely with the Service Chiefs and the principal personnel officers of all three Services – including the Second Sea Lord.

The spokesman said: "Every facet of the issue will be looked at, including legal and practical implications, before a recommendation is made to Ministers.

"The review will be conducted swiftly, but not in haste."

The suspension of the policy currently affects five people serving in the Royal Navy who were being investigated when the European Court announced its ruling. The proceedings are now on hold. Those of the five who have been suspended – MOD would not reveal how many – will remain suspended, while those who

■ Turn to back page

Ship campaigner loses patron status in Cavalier row

ONE of the leading campaigners who fought to save Britain's last wartime destroyer, HMS Cavalier, has been stripped of his status as patron of the HMS Cavalier (Chatham) Trust over a row about the treatment of the ship.

Sid Anning, Chairman of the HMS Cavalier Association, has publicly questioned the Trust's intentions towards the ship, which is now preserved at Chatham Historic Dockyard thanks largely to National Heritage Lottery funds.

Mr Anning has accused the Trust of

dragging its feet over realising the aim of making Cavalier a "live, living and working ship" to train potential recruits to the Navy.

He has also criticised the way in which the ship is being shown – that it has been painted the wrong shade of grey and that it is being used as a backdrop "for a noisy, undignified and historically inaccurate display more appropriate to a funfair than a serious historical museum" and out of keeping with the intended memorial theme.

He told Navy News: "Sadly, the HMS Cavalier Association has never been

asked for any help or advice on the history, running and maintenance of the ship."

A spokesman for the Trust told us that they had written to Mr Anning pointing out that while the nation owed a debt to him and to many others for keeping the fight to save Cavalier alive, his correspondence to "various bodies" about his concerns was misinformed and misleading and was undertaken without consultation with the Trust.

They told him: "We have decided it is no longer appropriate for you to be

patron... and have taken a formal resolution putting this into effect."

The Trust spokesman said: "While we are fully alive to the intrinsic importance of the ship, decisions on her interpretation and management cannot be taken in isolation, or without any regard to the financial consequences."

"We have to create in the Dockyard an experience which will attract a far wider spectrum of people than hitherto to secure the revenue essential to the survival of the whole."

He said the Trust were taking an his-

torically and technically appropriate approach to the ship's repair and display. The colour she had been painted was compatible with the decision to preserve her as far as possible in the form in which she appeared after her last in-service refit, in 1966.

It was the Trust's "full intention" to continue to consult widely on all details of proposed work and interpretation, a process in which the HMS Cavalier Association was expected to play a full part through its president, Rear Admiral John Hervey, who was a Director of the Trust.

Inverness joins hunt for deadly relics in the Baltic

A ROYAL Navy minehunter has been taking part in a multi-national operation to clear mines laid by the Germans in both world wars off the coast of Latvia.

Chatham back in the Fleet

HMS CHATHAM is due to be accepted back into the Fleet this month following a ten-month refit at Devonport and weeks of sea trials.

Chatham is the latest of the four Type 22 Batch 3 ships, and the last to complete her first refit, almost ten years after she was launched.

She is also the last of DML's core contract; the company must now bid for work on a competitive basis.

Under her Commanding Officer, Capt George Zambellas, the frigate is due to carry out operational sea training and visit the Medway early next year.

Pilot training scholarship goes on offer

A CANDIDATE is being sought for a scholarship for a 'frozen' air transport pilot's licence through the Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators.

The J. N. Somers Award has been granted to the Guild for a full-time course at the BAe College of Flight Training, Spain.

Applicants must be 18-28, hold a PPL and Class 1 CAA Medical, and have at least five GCSE passes and A-levels in relevant subjects.

For details and an application form, send a stamped, addressed envelope to GAPAN, Cobham House, 291 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8QE, marking your enquiry letter 'Scholarship'.

Applications must be received by November 15.

Clyde-based HMS Inverness joined vessels from Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, Estonia and Norway for the operation in the last week of October.

They were searching a 50 sq mile area for defensive sea mines and other explosives which may have been dropped in the area during wartime.

The Royal Swedish Navy, which was leading the group, has been involved for four years in operations to clear Latvian waters to make them safer for trawlers and other shipping.

The Sandown-class Inverness brought some of the most sophisticated minehunting sonar available to the operation, her first 'live' venture since she was commissioned in 1991, and her first deployment since she emerged from refit six months ago.

Inverness's mission follows the success of a similar project off Estonian waters last year involving the Hunt-class minehunter HMS Atherstone.

Rare Trafalgar report set to sell for £2,500

A RARE copy of an official report of the Battle of Trafalgar by Nelson's second-in-command is expected to fetch up to £2,500 when it goes up for sale on November 11.

The report was written by Vice Admiral Collingwood and is contained in a complete issue of *The London Gazette Extraordinary* dated November 6, 1805.

It will be among items in a maritime sale at Christie's in London.

Also due to go under the hammer is a model of the Pandora which recaptured Bounty mutineers, and a painting by William Collingwood Smith of the Royal Sovereign breaking up the enemy line at Trafalgar. That is estimated at up to £30,000.

MARCHING REASON FOR WARSHIPS IN THE NORTH



● Against an impressive backdrop, the ship's company of HMS Newcastle parade through their namesake city.
Picture: LA(PHOT) Paul Smith



● The senior rates from HMS Iron Duke show 'em how it's done during the ship's company's parade through Hull.
Picture: LA(PHOT) Brad Bradbury

Iron Duke parades to mark Hull's 700th

SAILORS of HMS Iron Duke played a prominent part in the 700th anniversary of one of Hull's most important events.

With bayonets fixed, swords drawn, colours flying and bands playing, a contingent of the ship's company marched through their affiliated city to celebrate the award by Edward I of Kingston upon Hull's Royal Charter.

They were accompanied by the Band of the Royal Marines Scotland, and members of the Prince of Wales Own Regiment, RAF Staxton-Wold, two flights of the Queen's

Colour Squadron and the 150th (Yorkshire) Transport Regiment RLC(V).

To coincide with the celebrations, eight members of the ship's company staged a four-day charity cycle ride from Portsmouth to Hull to raise almost £3,000 for the Children's Unit at Hull Royal Infirmary.

The team, led by LPT John Webb, collected £2,500 in donations en route, from people in such places as Basingstoke, Peterborough and Grimsby. The final figure was swollen by funds raised by Iron Duke's personnel while the Type 23 frigate was

deployed to the Adriatic with NATO's Standing Naval Force Mediterranean.

The other cyclists were CH Darren Ward, OM Neil Maddocks, MEM Stuart Simpson, LMEM Chris Brown, OM Jason Boeuf, OM Matt Gilbert and LCH Pulford.

The ship's professional achievements have also been notable: she has been presented with the Towed Array Efficiency Trophy by Ultra Electronics for her outstanding work with towed array passive sonar last year. During that time she was involved in two live operations, two exercises and a trial.

Geordies put on a massive welcome

THOUSANDS of Newcastle people left their offices and shops at lunchtime to cheer the ship's company of HMS Newcastle as they exercised their right as Freemen of the City to march through the streets.

The parade, accompanied by the Band of the Royal Marines Scotland, was the highlight of a five-day visit by the Type 42 destroyer, which has held the Freedom of Newcastle since her completion in 1978.

The salute was taken by the ship's Commanding Officer, Cdr Steve Kenny, and the Deputy Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Cllr Peter Thomson, in the absence of the Mayor due to illness.

There was further evidence of Newcastle's pride in their ship when 8,700 people were welcomed on board during the two days that the ship was open to the public.

During her stay, the proceeds of charity events on board – including a 'village fete' and a grow-a-beard competition – were presented to the children's ward of Newcastle General Hospital and the Percy Hedley School for children with cerebral palsy and communications difficulties.

The donations of about £250 each were presented by PO Alistair Winter and Cdr Kenny respectively.

The money was raised mainly during HMS Newcastle's Balkans deployment earlier this year, and brings to over £3,000 the amount raised by the ship for Newcastle organisations this year.

No more 'Photos' – we're 'image technicians'



● WSTD Rosie Wilkinson receives the Navy News Trophy – awarded to her late husband, LA(PHOT) Laurence Wilkinson – from her former boss, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Michael Boyce. See centre pages.

THE RN Photographic Branch celebrates its 80th anniversary this month – with the suggestion that the "Photos" might nowadays be better called "image technicians".

Lt Cdr Gordon Ford, the specialisation's functional head, told *Navy News* "photographer" is becoming too narrow a word for today's modern exponent of the art.

"Today's photographer is not only expected to learn all the composition, aesthetic and technical skills of his predecessor, but must also be conversant with digital enhancement techniques."

"Most photographic sections now have digital cameras and are able to scan images ready for transmission to any part of the world via landlines or satellite. All photographers are expected to master techniques which would have been unheard of 10 years ago."

"Public relations and Press photography have always been recognised as specialist areas and the RN professional photographer's work is increasingly appearing in the quality national newspapers."

"This is due both to their eye for a good Press picture and the modern, digital technology used in transmitting images from theatre to UK for release within hours, or even minutes of them being taken."

"Similarly, ships carrying professional photographers have the ability to transmit good quality photographs of engineering work back to shore for immediate analysis, saving valuable time and money."

"The skills of the photographer are also highly valued in the intelligence area, where Photos have proved to be very accomplished in image analysis. All volunteers for transfer are now screened for colour perception to enable them to undertake this growing task."



● OLD-STYLE IMAGE MAKERS: The Navy's first photographers were trained to record the fall of shot from naval gunfire.

Full manning by 2005 is the 'Policy for People'

BRITAIN's Armed Forces are rising to the challenge to recruit more sailors, soldiers and airmen and the Services could see full staffing again within just a few years.

This was Armed Forces Minister John Speller's upbeat message on his 'Policy for People' initiatives to recruit, retain and sustain people in the Services.

Speaking at the Royal United Services Institute, he congratulated the Armed Forces on recruiting over 26,000 personnel in 1998-99 – the best figures since the end of the Cold War.

Concert dates

CONCERTS by the Band of HM Royal Marines Portsmouth will be held at St Mary's Church, Fratton on November 25 and December 9 – the Christmas concert – at 7.30p.m.

For tickets at £5 (£4 OAP/students) call the Concert Secretary on 01705 726182.

HMS Nelson's Charity Christmas Concert given by the band will be held in the gymnasium on November 30 at 7.30p.m. Tickets at £5 from the main gate or by post from WOCA P. A. Symington, Catering Office, HMS Nelson, PO1 3HH (cheques payable to Central Fund HMS Nelson, please enclose sae.) All proceeds to the RN and RM Children's Fund.

"This is an impressive achievement – young people know that the Services are back in business with careers open to all talents and all sections of society," he said.

Award-winning advertising campaigns, advances into new recruitment markets such as the ethnic minorities, and the increased public profile of the Armed Forces had all contributed to the success.

With regard to retention, Mr Speller stressed that breaking the vicious cycle of overstretch and undermanning was a priority.

Reductions in the high level of UK commitments around the world were easing the strain in the short term, but improving the quality of life for personnel and their families and making Service careers more attractive was the key to ensuring experienced people served for longer.

"People leave the Services for all sorts of reasons – we are looking seriously at the causes of their dissatisfaction and we are introducing realistic measures to tackle them."

Better leave arrangements, improved telephone facilities and new e-mail communication between personnel on operations and their families were helping to minimise the effects of separation. A new emphasis on education and a "whole life" approach to

employment was encouraging more new recruits to view an Armed Forces career as a career for life.

Only continued focus on the nation's Servicemen and women would lead to the goal of full manning as early as 2005.

Second Sea Lord Admiral Sir John Brigstocke told the annual meeting of the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust on board HMS Warrior he was heartened by the "real progress" being made in welfare provision.

"Some would argue that were the Service, and the State in its wider role, doing their jobs properly then there would be no need for Naval charities."

"Personally, I don't subscribe to this view – there will always be a need for a safety net to support those who have fallen through the clutches of Government accounting rules, or other rules and regulations, but whose circumstances nonetheless make them deserving causes."

Destroyers meet

WORLD War II British destroyer personnel are invited to meet at the Cenotaph on November 23 at 10.45a.m. and afterwards to lunch at the Victory Services Club for lunch. Contact Sam Morley on 01707 872720 by November 2 for details.



Victory broadside salute to gallery

HMS VICTORY, the world's oldest commissioned warship, fired her first broadside in nearly two centuries on Trafalgar Day.

The cannon roared at 12.30p.m. – the time the battle began – to mark the opening of the Royal Naval Museum's new Victory Gallery, which features two permanent exhibitions devoted to Nelson's flagship.

Lincolnshire-based Pyro Tech attached charges to cannon on her starboard side to recreate the thunderous noise, smoke and ripple that a broadside produces when all cannon are fired together.

It is believed that HMS Victory last fired a shot in anger during the Baltic campaigns between 1808 and 1811 when she was the flagship of Admiral Sir James Saumarez. She was then paid off at Portsmouth on December 18, 1812.

The new gallery marks the completion of the museum's £5 million redevelopment, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Hampshire County Council.

Falklands Chapel Service

FAMILIES of personnel killed in the Falklands War are invited to the Dedication Service of the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel at Pangbourne College, Berkshire on November 18 at 2p.m.

They should contact Angela Perry on 01869 233092 for invitations.

It's a bit of an animal

While stationed in the Gulf, HMS Cumberland, aka "The Mighty Sausage", asked their affiliated Sea Cadet unit TS Royalist to provide them with a 7ft Peperami sausage they could fly while undertaking Replenishment at Sea.

The Kendal Cadets duly obliged – and sent us a photo of the well-known "Bit of an animal" boning up on *Navy News* while waiting to go on draft.

Submarine wreckage discovered near Italy

THE WRECK of a submarine which vanished 56 years ago has been discovered off the coast of Italy.

The vessel, found by Italian sports divers in the Strait of Taranto, is believed to be the submarine HMS Regent which was last seen in April 1943.

The Navy sent HMS Atherstone to investigate and her remotely operated vehicles were used to survey the wreck.

Only the stern remains and the engine room hatch is still open.

The boat, which sailed from Malta on April 12, 1943, is believed to have struck a mine near the small Adriatic fishing port of Barletta on or about April 18.

Sixty-three men were lost with HMS Regent but only four bodies were recovered, two wearing escape equipment, when they were washed up on the coast of Puglia between May 1 and May 17 of 1943.

As a mark of respect for the dead the Naval Attaché in Rome, Capt Graham Wiltshire, sailed to the site with HMS Atherstone and laid a wreath of poppies over the wreck during a service of remembrance.

All known relatives of the crew have been contacted by Cdr Jeff Tall, Director of the Submarine Museum at Gosport.

And work is now in hand in both Italy and the UK to confirm the identity of the wreck beyond doubt.

Somerset sails to Sierra Leone

ONE OF THE first ports of call during HMS Somerset's Atlantic deployment was Freetown, the war-ravaged capital of Sierra Leone in West Africa.

The ship, which is spending six-months as Atlantic Guardship South, was welcomed on her arrival by the country's leader, President Kabbah, who joined the ship with representatives of the United Nations and West African peace keeping forces and inspected a ceremonial guard.



● Sierra Leone's President Kabbah is welcomed on board HMS Somerset in the capital of Freetown. He inspected the ceremonial guard and enjoyed a tour of the ship.

During Somerset's visit the ship's company took on a Displaced Person's XI at football and donated their boots to the team afterwards.

A working party from the ship went to the orphanage run by the Sierra Leone Mission School, which is being rebuilt after it was burned down by rebels in the civil war.

After giving the children presents of sweets, stationery and sports equipment the sailors helped with the rebuilding, plumbing and repainting of the building while the ship's doctor, Surg Lt Sue Porter conducted a clinic for 200 children and adults.

Cdr Cochrane and a delegation from the ship also attended a service at the Commonwealth War Cemetery and laid a wreath in tribute to the Sierra Leone forces killed in both world wars.

Cdr Cochrane said: "I am overwhelmed by the friendliness of the people of Sierra Leone and believe that their spirit will prevail in their struggle for peace. We have made many new friendships which we hope to continue during our next visit early in 2000."

□ Somerset's island visit - page 15.

Dental company has lots to smile about

A CONTRACT worth £7 million has been won by a Cardiff company which will supply the needs of Service dentists for the next five years.

The agreement between the Medical Supplies Agency and Minerva Dental Ltd will transform the way that surgeries are stocked and supplied with their everyday needs.

Under existing arrangements, Service dentists are obliged to keep a high level of stock which can easily run out of date, but Minerva's undertaking to provide products by next-day

delivery should make this a thing of the past.

Dentists will also be able to view pictures of the exact products they require on the company's website, cutting out the confusion caused by large, number orientated, catalogues.

At the signing of the new contract, Minerva Dental's Managing Director Patrick Mather said: "We are delighted to be awarded such an important contract."

"Our staff have worked hard to secure this valuable business and it will benefit not only our own company but South Wales as a whole."



● REMEMBRANCE: One of the 200 Argonaut personnel who paid their respects to the fallen of the Gallipoli Campaign.

Gallipoli remembered

THE SACRIFICES of another generation were recalled when 200 personnel deployed on Exercise Argonaut visited the battlefields of the Gallipoli campaign.

They visited the sites after completing exercises in Southern Turkey to pay their respects to the 130,000 people who lost their lives.

As Navy News went to press, the Argonaut task group led by HMS Fearless and HMS Ocean was taking part in a huge amphibious landing exercise with French, American and Egyptian forces.

Exercise Bright Star, the biggest serial of the Argonaut deployment so far, will see hundreds of Marines from 40 Cdo landing at El Alamein in Egypt. For a full report, see next month's Navy News.



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(August 28th - 30th 1999)

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Navy helps launch Rugby World Cup

DOZENS of Naval personnel took to the pitch on the day that the Rugby World Cup kicked off in Cardiff's new Millennium Stadium.

Sailors from HMS Cardiff and a team of Royal Marines from Plymouth-based 42 Commando were playing a starring role in the spectacular opening ceremony which preceded the first match of the tournament between Wales and Argentina.

Over 75,000 fans watched as Commandos from Support Company 42 Cdo abseiled from the Stadium's roof and HMS Cardiff's ship's company built a huge sculpture of a fire-breathing Welsh dragon.

And after Shirley Bassey, Max Boyce, Catatonia and other acts entertained the crowd it was the sailors' job to clear the pitch before the game got under way.

When the carnival ends after the Millennium Stadium final on November 6, HMS Cardiff will provide a 24-man guard of honour for The Queen who will preside over the closing ceremony.

The Type 42 destroyer will be berthed at Cardiff's Queen Alexandra Docks during the weekend of the final.

Pictures: PO (PHOT) Wayne Humphreys, HQRM



● SPECTACULAR: Sailors from HMS Cardiff build a fire-breathing Welsh dragon as Commandos (right) abseiled onto the pitch.



@ Bon voyage!...

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● Caribbean visitor – fleet tanker RFA Gold Rover.

Facts and figures

Class: Small Fleet Tanker	Lloyds Classification: +100 A1	Complement: 56 (18 officers)
Pennant number: A271	Displacement: 11,522 tonnes fully loaded	Machinery: Two Crossley-Pielstick 16 PC2V diesels, one shaft, bow thruster
Builder: Swan Hunter, Wallsend-on-Tyne	Length: 140.3 metres	Radar: Racal Decca 52690 ARPA; Racal Decca 1690; I-band
Launched: March 7, 1973	Beam: 19.2 metres	Aircraft: Platform for Sea King or Lynx
Commissioned: March 22, 1974	Draught: 7.3 metres	
Port of Registry: London	Speed: 19 knots max	

Gold Rover slips out of harm's way

ROYAL Fleet Auxiliary tanker Gold Rover had her maintenance period rudely interrupted by the hurricane which brought havoc to the United States.

The small fleet tanker, which routinely supports the Royal Navy's warship presence in the Caribbean region, was alongside in Mayport, Florida, when Hurricane Floyd hit the US Atlantic coast.

Along with the John F. Kennedy carrier group, Gold Rover – the only ship to bear that name in the RN or RFA – was forced to sail, returning afterwards with minor storm damage.

After her most recent refit, Gold Rover became Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) tanker for the first quarter of 1998, then deployed to the South Atlantic with HMS Edinburgh.

She was then redeployed to the West Indies in support of HMS Marlborough, but was diverted en route to help with humanitarian operations around Sierra Leone.

By mid-March this year Gold Rover

was in the Caribbean, supporting HMS Marlborough in countering drugs smuggling. The Type 23 frigate has since been succeeded by her sister ship, HMS Northumberland.

Since leaving the UK, Gold Rover has steamed more than 66,000 nautical miles, and her list of port visits tends towards the exotic, including such places as Rio de Janeiro, Tobago, St Lucia, Nassau, Key West, Santo Domingo, Aruba and Montserrat.

She is due to depart the West Indies, in company with Northumberland, within the next few weeks, arriving back in the UK next month.

A brief spell as FOST tanker will take her through to a destore in the spring, in preparation for refit.

Gold Rover is designed to replenish ships at sea with fuel oil, aviation fuel, fresh water and a small amount of dry cargo and refrigerated stores.

She is not large enough to support a task group, but is ideal for supporting single ships or small groups.

Although Gold Rover has a landing platform capable of taking a Sea King, she has no hangar to work on aircraft.

Presentation team back on the road

THE ROYAL Navy Presentation Team has launched its Millennium Tour with a bang in London.

The event, hosted by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, was a 'sell-out', with 800 guests converging on the Kensington Town Hall.

Among those in the audience was the Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr Priscilla Frazer.

The evening took the form of a fast-moving multi-media presentation with the theme of the Royal Navy today, followed by a candid and frank question-and-answer session.

A musical set by the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Portsmouth concluded the event.

The team is now on the road, touring the country and meeting the general public to explain what the Royal Navy is doing – and why – its plans for the future, and how taxpayers' money is spent.

Team Leader Capt Richard Leaman said: "Our aim is to raise public awareness of, and gain support for, the Royal Navy and all its business."

"We had a terrific response in Kensington, and hope to maintain the same level of interest in other towns we will visit over the next 18 months."

"We talk to Parliamentary and Ministry of Defence audiences as well as to the public, and to large societies and clubs."

"We are fully-booked until mid-2000, but those who are interested in having us speak to their group or organisation, later in the year, should contact us now, to avoid disappointment."

More information on the RN Presentation Team is available from WO John Prior on 0207 937



● Capital host – First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Michael Boyce (right), accompanied by Assistant Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Jonathan Band, arrives at Kensington for the launch of the RN Presentation Team Millennium Tour.

5780, fax 0207 937 4787, or by writing to The RN Presentation Team, 1A Iverna Gardens, Kensington, London W8 6TN.

The website is at www.royal-navy.mod.uk – the team has its own page in the 'events' category – and the team can be contacted via e-mail on rnpt@gtnet.gov.uk

In the past year the RN show, presented by a four-strong team of a Royal Navy captain, a lieutenant, a Royal Marine and a LWEM technician, has ventured as far north as

Aberdeen and south to Penzance.

Around 12,000 people have been invited to see the presentations, with an average audience of between 150 to 200 – the 800 at Kensington is thought to be the biggest single event so far.

The presentation is updated every year as the team prepares to go out on the road, with the latest video footage and photographs, but the scripts are continually reviewed in order to reflect Navy operations around the world.



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JACK

BY TUGS



Grave concern

I WAS horrified to read that sports divers had been raiding the wreck of the submarine A7, which is a Registered Grave.

The CO was my uncle, Lt Gilbert Molesworth Welman of Trewarthenick, Cornwall. Aged 25, he had recently returned to the UK after three years on the China Station Submarine Flotilla based on the depot ship HMS Rosario in Hong Kong.

He was unmarried, but we, his nephews and nieces and our descendants add up to 56 of his blood relations now living.

Seeing that there were ten others in the boat when she sank, those directly associated with this submarine must now number several hundred.

Our understanding of the circumstances was not that the submarine was exercising at the time, but that she was doing post-refit trials and that the disaster occurred on a trial-dive off Rame Head.

Gilbert's cousin, Lt Eric Welman DSO, DSC* commanded the coastal motor boats during the Zeebrugge Raid on April 23, 1918. - Cdr J. Ferrier, Monmouth.

D-Day signal

FROM the bridge of HMS Seagull in the Solent on June 5, 1944, I saw that the HQ ship Largs was festooned with bunting flying from her cargo masts.

Our Yeoman translated these as "Good Hunting" and "England expects that every man will do his duty" - at least that's what my 76-year-old memory cells tell me, but an old shipmate, Lt Bill Hillman RNVR, says it's a figment of my overheated imagination.

Is he right? - M. Cross, Bristol.

Letters to the Editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

Freemasons angered by loyalty slur

REGARDING the article "Warning over Freemasonry membership" (September issue) I find the thought behind such statements utterly disgraceful.

The Home Affairs Select Committee, in its Second Report published on May 19, acknowledged that "There is a great deal of unjustified paranoia about Freemasonry". Earlier in the House of Lords, Lord Williams of Mostyn stated that anyone in a free society was entitled to be a Freemason.

I notice in the article that DCI JS 75/99 points out that "there is no policy to preclude Service personnel from membership of any lawful and benevolent organisation". If this be the case, why bring the matter up in the first case? - G. H. Harrison, Botley, Hants.

THIS article on Freemasonry I imagine originated in the MOD and illustrates the lack of knowledge that is typical of so many critics. After all, it was mainly the Navy and the Services in general that introduced Freemasonry to so many parts of the world, and thus a worldwide brotherhood has evolved embracing men of all races and creeds, regardless of rank or title, whose object is the improvement

of mankind.

It is certainly not a secret society and has never claimed to be. Over the years there have been many books published and more recently TV programmes detailing some of the ceremonies to an extent that it can hardly claim to be a society with secrets. - J. W. Thorne, Hemel Hempstead

I AM an ex-leading seaman and a current member of the Royal Naval Association and as a Freemason I take great exception to the inference in your article. What utter rubbish for anyone to suggest that because a man is a Freemason he risks establishing disparate loyalties.

We are enjoined "To swear allegiance to the sovereign of your native land" and it may interest you to know that the largest donation to the South Atlantic Fund after the Falklands War was made by the Masonic Grand Charity of England. - J. Irvine, Poole, Dorset.

Lost cap mystery

THE year was 1958, the ship was MHS Modeste, the place was Aqaba, the crime was disposing of the Captain's one and only cap.

We had been sent at very short notice from Singapore to the Middle East, 54 days at sea. Lower deck was cleared, a demand for the culprit to step forward was made, with the promise of 90 days DQs made. Nobody volunteered, crash search of crew's messes and lockers ensued, no cap. Next step, all crew had to sign a chit denying any knowledge of whereabouts of cap (shades of the ice-cream incident in *The Caine Mutiny*).

Now it's 40 years ago I do not think the threat of punishment still stands. So, just to clear up, does anyone out there really know who did it? - R. Grevett, Hunmanby, N. Yorks.

How do I find room for gays?

ON the subject of homosexuals being allowed in the Armed Forces, may I as an accommodation manager present my view?

At present in all ships' Standing Orders, no females are allowed in male accommodation and vice versa. Therefore, how can I regulate single-sex accommodation?

For example, my ex-husband returned unexpectedly back from sea a week before I was moving into a new house. I had moved on board and because of the rules we had to book into a B & B as we were not entitled to a married quarter for such a short period.

In my role as an accommodation manager, it is hard enough segregating the non-smokers from the smokers, never mind gay personnel. Will I have to create heterosexual floors and gay floors? If so, can Wren Smith and AB Jones now live in the same mess? If not, then surely this is discrimination. - POWREN QA Connell-Malcolm, HMS Neptune.

Seven out of five

YOUR picture of a Fairey Seal (Aircraft of the Royal Navy No 35) took me back to the early summer of 1939 when I was doing the bombing and gunnery part of my Air Observers course at RAF Acklington.

We did our bombing in Hawker Hinds and occasionally in the Boulton Paul Overstrand or in the Sidstrand - two-engined biplanes from the end of World War I - and gunnery in the Hind or Fairey Seal. We used Lewis or Vickers K guns in a Scarff ring mounting in the Hind and a semi-circular mounting that could be raised about 45 degrees at the end of the long rear cockpit of the Seal.

To fire at a drogue target towed parallel to our aircraft one had to unclip the "monkey chain" attached to a loop on the tail of our flying jackets - designed to prevent an unexpected exit from the aircraft - and sit up on the cockpit coaming with one's bottom over the side to point the gun out broadside, a somewhat nerve-racking manoeuvre the first time.

Usually two u/t observers would fire in turn at the same target which would then be dropped for the holes to be checked. To this end we spent much of our tarmac time dipping .303 rounds into red paint which was gradually congealing in the air. These were then fed into a 47- or 97-round drum and one trainee would use plain ammo and the other the red-tipped rounds.

The ground staff would then count the number of plain holes and those with red edges, divide by two (assuming an entry and exit hole) and telephone the result to the plotting room.

It was common for the trainee using plain ammo to get a higher score so that we suspected that the paint was not always coming off on entry.

On one flight using plain ammo I lined up the front half of the drogue in my ring-and-bead sights and pressed the trigger. As I did so the bead foresight lurched slightly to one side.

The Lewis was a very slow-firing gun and I stopped after only two shots. As the foresight was still there I lined up again and pressed once more. The foresight came off and floated overboard to be lost forever in the bay below with no more than three more shots fired.

On landing I was eventually told that I had scored seven hits with my five rounds, so our suspicions were confirmed.

At the Empire Air Day late in June a flight of our Hinds bombed a canvas and wood fort constructed in the middle of the airfield - there were no runways in those days - and was attacked by a flight of Seals posing as fighters!

A Whitley and a Hurricane did fly over during the course of the afternoon but many of the crowd were contemptuous of our display.

I was one of the party in gas masks and capes who drove out in a lorry to rescue survivors from the "bombing".

Unfortunately, we picked the burliest of our number as the victim and nearly dropped him while trying to hoist him on a stretcher into the ambulance.

We found that doing violent exercise in a gas mask caused it to lift off the face at every exhalation of breath. I am glad I never needed to use one in earnest. - L. Wheatley, Bude.

Winnie, where and when?

WHEN I was serving in HMS Scourge in 1942 we escorted Winston Churchill to the USA in the liner Queen Mary. This picture in my possession commemorates a similar occasion, I suppose - can anyone suggest where and when? - F. E. Paxton, Rayleigh, Essex



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Editorial and Business address: Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, Hants, PO1 3HH

Editor: Jim Allaway

Deputy Editor: Anton Hanney

Assistant Editors: Dominic Blake and Mike Gray

Business Manager: Anne Driver

TELEPHONES

Editorial: 01705-294228/724163 Fax: 01705 838845 (Mil. PNB 24163)

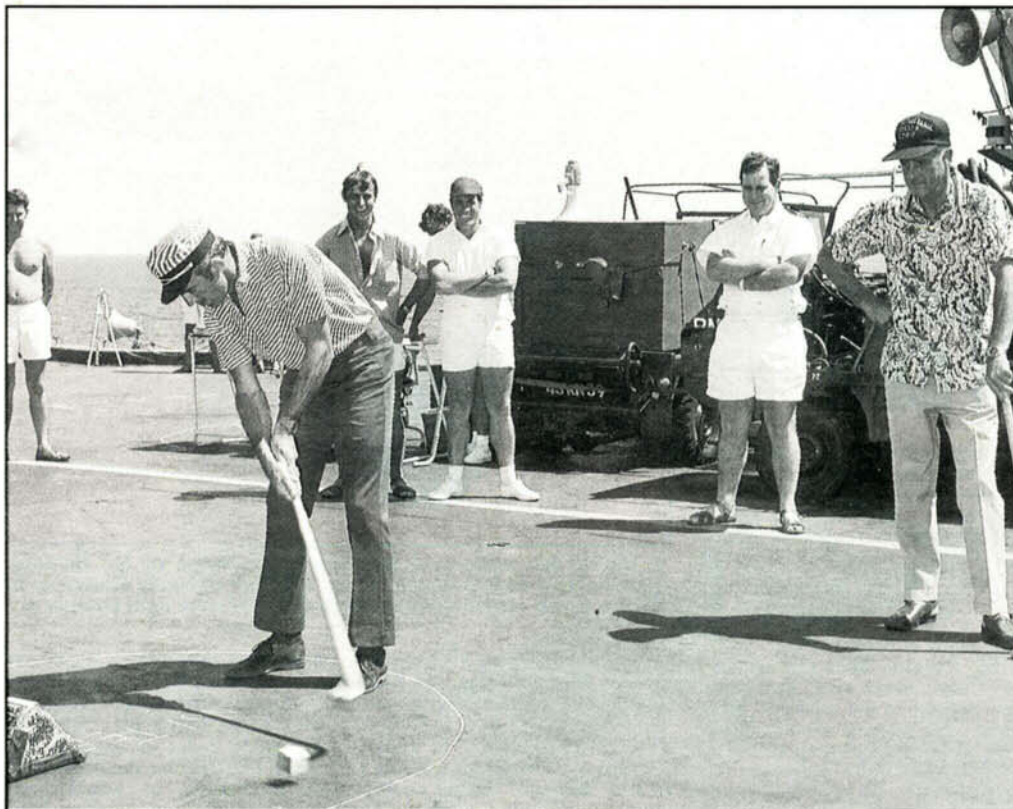
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GOLFERS SQUARED UP TO THE CHALLENGE



● **SQUARE GOLF:** Cdr H. E. Tate tees off on the flight deck of HMS Albion, Capt James Jungius looking on.

IN LAST month's issue I told you about the field gun competition held at sea in HMS Albion during 1970-72. Well, that was a challenge, but what about golf at sea – yes, 9-hole golf?

As CPTI I would inform Capt Jungius of the intended activities for the weekend if there was no flying. One Friday as I stepped onto the bridge he called me over and said that he had received complaints from the senior and non-sporting members of the crew that at weekends, when there was no flying, they couldn't use the flight deck for sunbathing as the PT staff always had some form of physical activity going on.

He thought we should give it a miss this weekend or at least have some genteel form of activity.

As I walked forward on the flight deck I noticed a deck hockey stick and puck underneath one of the forklifts. I picked up the stick and started to hit the puck down the flight deck to the lockers where they should have been stowed. And it was then I thought, what about golf?

I hit the puck as hard as I could with a golf swing and it went about 12 yards and then rolled off into the gun sponsons.

Well, that wouldn't do – and as for using a real ball, too dangerous and with a rolling ship, out of the question.

I then remembered seeing in the damage control wood racks lengths of 2in X 2in mahogany hardwood, so I

went to see my good friend Jumper Collins, the Chief Chippy. He cut me off a 2in cube – and with the first hit I knew we had the answer. It went 10-15 yards, bobbled a few times and then came to rest.

So, we had the "balls" – and as luck would have it, on our last visit to Singapore we had received a shipment of 60 new deck hockey sticks.

As a keen golfer, the Captain was intrigued, but after he hit the cube and it sailed over the side, he said "I hope you have enough balls. What about the sunbathers?"

I said: "Golf etiquette, sir – just shout 'fore!'". He shrugged his shoulders and said: "Oh dear, I feel more flak coming my way..."

The course was nine holes zig-zagged across the flight deck. The greens were irregular circles with numbered

flags in the middle on an 8in base circled with chalk so that when the flag was removed the base outline represented the hole.

We decided we would raise money for our Guide Dog Fund, so it was £1 a round and 10p for each ball. Needless to say, some hackers took a good supply of balls when they started and in the end we raised over £250.

The story was covered by *Navy News* and picked up by the *Daily Mirror*. This was seen by a lady in Dallas, Texas who wrote to the Captain saying her husband was a golfing nut, but one thing he had not got was a square golf ball.

The Captain had one mounted on the ship's crest and sent to her. Great ship, great crew, great Captain. – Bryan Garnham, Bury St Edmunds.

Letters

Source branch treated as the 'poor cousins'

REGARDING the articles about recruits flooding into the Warfare Branch (September issue), that's all very well for the OMs but I find there is little comfort for the few source branch ratings still around who are being treated as the poor cousins of the Warfare Branch.

We find ourselves being forced out of our preferred base port areas, i.e. Devonport, and are getting less and less shoreside billets – those that we do get are the ones the OMs don't want.

On coming up for my time to go back to sea, I applied to Drafty on the appropriate form to be sent to a Devonport ship, only to be told that there are no longer any drafts for LS(M) on any ships in Guzz (as they have all been taken by LOMs). I find this hard to believe.

I find it unfair that as Source branch we are being fobbed off on to the older ships like Type 42s and Fearless, all of which are based at Portsmouth. It seems a cheap way for the Navy to get rid of us, due to the fact that many of us over the years have settled in the South West, many even moving families down from the north of England and Scotland after Rosyth was closed. Now because we live in Devonport but are based in Portsmouth we are being forced to go back to the "weekend relationships", putting even more strain on an already stressful family way of life.

Now that many ships are spending anything from six to nine months at a time at sea, wouldn't it be better that most of the ship's company were to come from the same base port as the ship, so that when the ship was alongside valuable time could be spent with families? – **An unhappy Source branch rating.**

Dress ship too costly

WITH regard to the ceremonial of dress ship, is it not time that costly, outdated and time-consuming ceremonies were abolished?

After currently sailing from Plymouth on a dress ship day, I was amazed to see that the only ship to be dressed overall was an American; all the Type 23s, one Type 22 and one Type 42 were dressed with masthead ensign only.

Does this not tell a story, especially of the 23's manpower?

Each unfitted flag costs £7.88. Multiply this by the amount of flags on a dressing line, then multiply this by every vessel in the Fleet and this is a large amount of money that the MOD would be better off spending on new age technology. – **CY D. Thompson, HMS Argyle.**

Secondary tasks

LRO SPURLING's comments on PAY 2000 and the way it should be worked for different branches leads us to believe he has been misinformed about the workload of the Supply and Secretariat branches.

Everyone works hard in the Royal Navy, it's just the variation of the job that differs. Although as some people may make out that "after all, they're only day workers", we do contribute a lot to the running of the Navy. The secondary jobs of the S & S speak for themselves.

During action stations S & S are involved in first-aid/damage control/fire-fighters/incident board markers/ action messing teams/gun loaders/BA controller/cleansing teams – and these are our secondary jobs. How many secondary tasks does an LRO have during an action station?

Regularly we see the so-called "secretaries" working to late in the evenings after an early start; so-called "waiters" working until late on cocktail parties; stores accountants bringing ships' stores on after secure hours; and chefs producing a meal three times a day every single day of the year.

As for our training, S & S branch courses are of considerable length and exceptional knowledge is involved – chefs now have to take on catering, until recently a specialist job of its own, and once that is completed, a lengthy Part IV draft and a completion of a Part IV task book before a draft order is even considered. It all comes down to teamwork at the end of the day, although some of us have to bowl as well as bat. – **CH P. Rooke and LCH M. R. Paton, 3Q Mess, HMS Campbeltown.**

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Comprehensive care is available for people with Alzheimer's and memory impairment – in a separate building which allows residents to live with as much dignity as possible in a loving and caring environment.

Unrivalled expertise at the Institute of Naval Medicine has helped prepare a famous explorer for his next trip – and scientists hope to learn from their patient's experiences.

Royal Navy fights a new cold war

THE NEWEST patient at the Navy's world-renowned cold injuries clinic could prove to be their most valuable.

Polar explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes spent a day at the clinic, at the Institute of Naval Medicine (INM) in Gosport, as part of his preparations for his next expedition.

And the Institute stands to gain unique data on the effects of cold on a man who regularly braves Arctic and Antarctic extremes.

The clinic is one of the many reverberations of the Falklands War which are still felt in the Navy.

Some 14 per cent of those evacuated for medical support from the South Atlantic had a primary initial diagnosis of non-freezing cold injury – the largest cause of non-battle casualties.

By Mike Gray

The result is that the INM now maintains what is believed to be the only permanent specialist cold injuries clinic in the world.

Dr Howard Oakley, Head of Survival and Thermal Medicine at the Institute, said: "My predecessors had always had an interest, but it was the Falklands which really brought it to the fore and sparked a clinical research programme."

"We have kept up the research ever since, which is very unusual, because historically when there has been a war with a lot of cold injuries, there has been a lot of research for two or three years, then it becomes necessary to move on, and projects are terminated."

"But we have managed to sustain our work, on a small scale, so we are not having to re-learn the

lessons of the past."

As well as research work, the Institute runs the weekly cold injuries clinic where they see Service personnel or civilians referred by their doctors because they are believed to have cold injuries, such as frostbite.

"We used to see 40 or 50 people a year, but in the past year or so that number has risen very dramatically – this year, already, we have seen 118 patients," said Dr Oakley, who believes better and earlier diagnosis are behind the rise.

The newest name on the clinic's list is expected to make a great contribution to their research.

Sir Ranulph approached Dr Mike Tipton at the INM on the advice of his nutrition expert and fellow polar explorer Dr Mike

Stroud, and the Navy's scientists jumped at the chance.

"We wouldn't expect to get anyone in the clinic who has had a greater exposure to extreme conditions, so he's setting a nice level for us," said Dr Tipton, Head of the Environmental Medicine Unit at the INM and Reader at the University of Portsmouth.

Sir Ranulph went through the clinic's standard tests, but there was an additional trial for their special patient – 40 minutes on an exercise bike in a warm pool, a gruelling effort accompanied by the relentless tick of a metronome, followed by 40 minutes cooling off.

"This test is looking at the 'null zone' – the zone between sweating and shivering," said Dr Tipton.

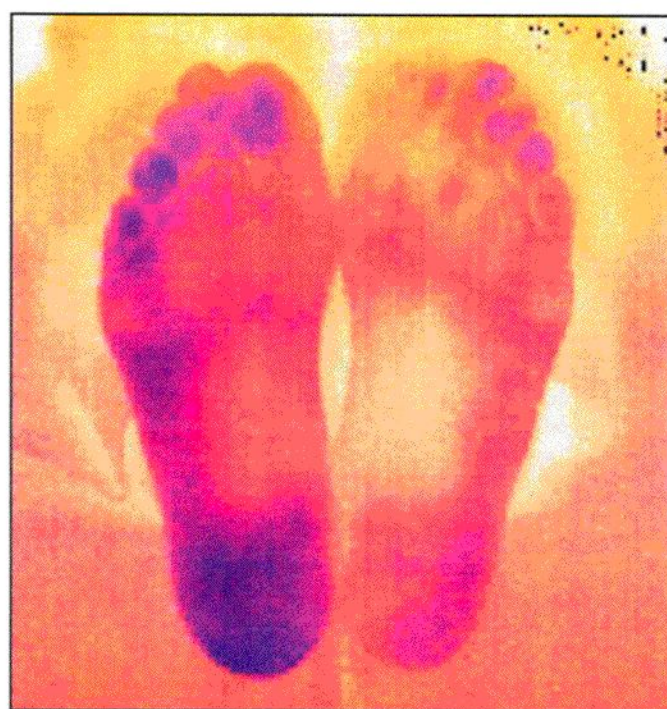
"People who go to the polar regions often report being affected more by warmth than cold, because they are working hard and wearing lots of layers of clothing."

"This test looks at warm as well as cold responses, particularly in relation to deep body temperature. The shivering response has a relevance for the general population. When there is an increase in thermal discomfort – when we start to feel cold – then shivering kicks in automatically."

"Repeated exposure to cold means you are less aware of the discomfort; the core temperature falls, and you do not do anything about it – like put a coat on."

"That might lead to problems such as hypothermia in old people or individuals in military exercises."

Dr Oakley said the injuries seen at the clinic are not usually blackened hands and feet, but mild conditions which can still cause life-long problems.



● Baring his soles – a thermographic image of Sir Ranulph Fiennes' feet before testing at the Institute of Naval Medicine; in simple terms, darker colours show areas of cold, light colours are warm.

"We had many Servicemen, particularly Royal Marines, who had a big problem in cold environments where they could be a liability to themselves and others," he said.

"What we are moving towards is treating a first or second injury – we intervene early. There's no big medical cure, but we must keep them away from cold for a while."

The INM has two unique ways of assessing these injuries:

■ Infra-red thermography, a sophisticated version of firefighters' body-heat sensors, which assesses how warm or cold the affected hands or feet are, and how well they re-warm after immersion in cold water for two minutes.

■ Undamaged hands or feet will re-warm fully within minutes, but severe cases may take hours.

■ By also assessing sensitivity to slight changes in temperature, scientists gain insights into the damage which the cold has caused to the nerves in the fingers or toes.

"We cannot give these people a magic drug – we are researching it, but for now we keep them off cold exposure," said Dr Oakley.

"It may take six to 18 months, or longer, but given that break away

from cold exposure, a significant number of people do improve.

"So this clinic salvages people. In the past, without being referred to this clinic, a lot of these people would have become medically unfit or discharged, or would have become so fed up suffering from cold feet that they would have handed in their notice."

The clinic played a key role in helping US veterans win a legal battle for pension and medical support.

"We do see overseas people – I've done quite a lot of work with the Chosin Few," he said.

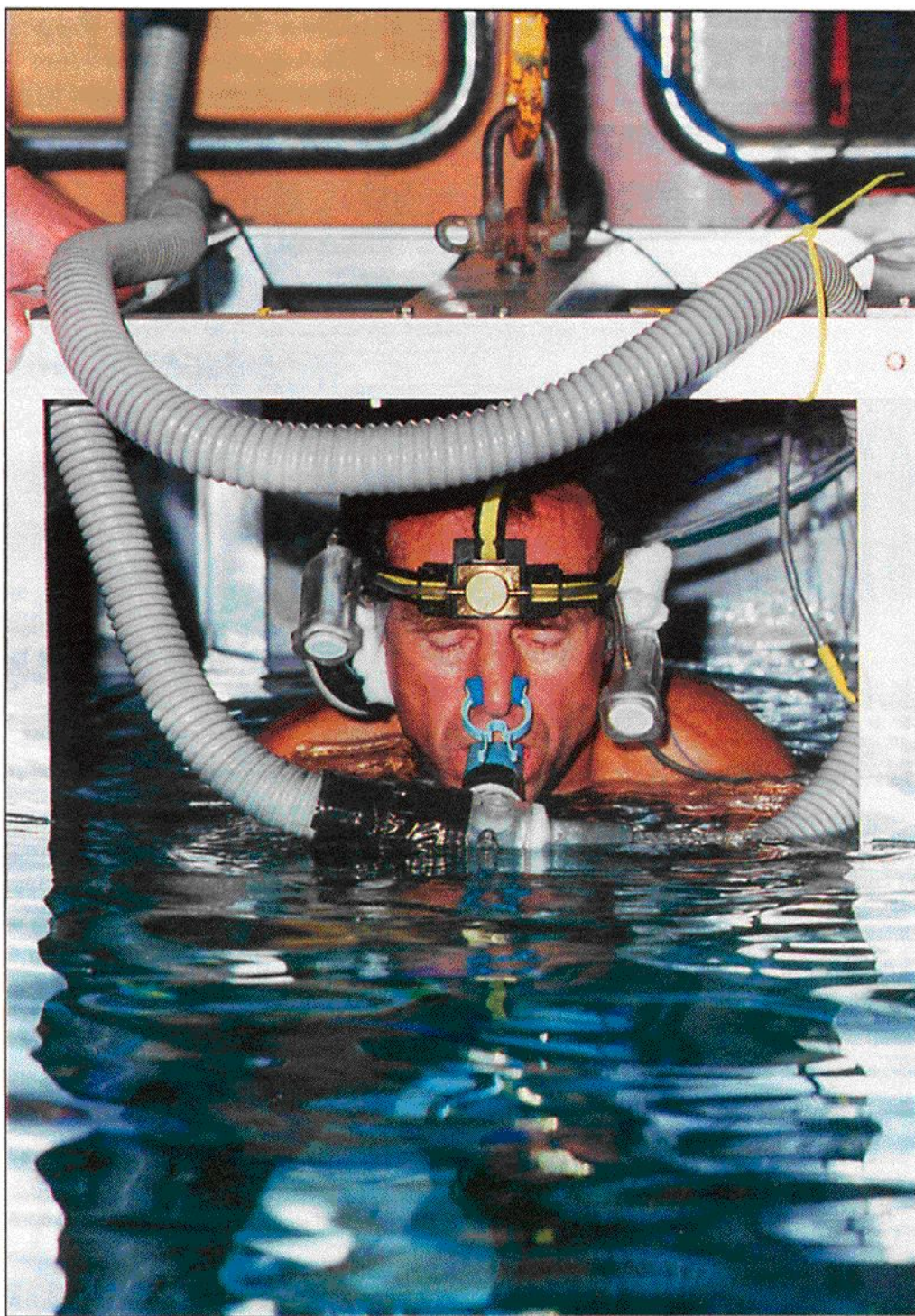
The Chosin Few are the veterans, mainly American but with others including British soldiers, of one of the fiercest battles of the Korean War, fought in bitter cold.

"We still see two or three veterans from World War II; one case was a prisoner-of-war who had been force-marched through Eastern Europe without proper footwear," said Dr Oakley.

"If veterans have got problems we are delighted to see them, though their GP needs to be aware they are coming to see us at the clinic."

■ Cartoon – page 20.

... this clinic salvages people ... a lot of them would have become medically unfit or discharged ...



● Water cycle – Sir Ranulph Fiennes enters the null zone – the zone between sweating and shivering – on a cycle machine in the INM's immersion pool.

Picture: LA(PHOT) Gary Davies (SFPD).

Polar expedition will provide vital data

SIR RANULPH Fiennes can trace his ancestry back down the centuries, and his calling has its roots in the heroic British explorers of old.

Now in his mid-50s, the 3rd Baronet has already proved himself in the most inhospitable regions on earth, having visited both poles and crossed the Arctic and Antarctic.

The former SAS soldier has taken a hovercraft up the White Nile and parachuted on to Europe's highest glacier.

But these are not simply great feats of endurance – each expedition has raised money for charity (over £4 million in total) and the next polar expedition, sponsored by Exel Logistics and departing early next year, will raise more than £1 million for the Cancer Research Campaign.

Sir Ranulph is conscious of the benefits to both sides of his visit to Hampshire.

"There isn't anywhere in the world with the facilities and expertise for this particular type of cold testing and cold research," he said.

"There are other places which specialise in other forms of research into the effects of cold on the human body, but the ones to which it would be most advantageous to record the characteristics of my particular body, before and after, happens to be a combination of Portsmouth University and the INM on this occasion."

"It's very useful for the INM's own work to get someone who costs the taxpayer nothing and is prepared to go for very long periods in such conditions."

"And for me, having been doing cold expeditions for about 26 years, some parts of my body have deteriorated, and this will help by telling me what parts have been damaged to what extent."

"Once I have seen the results of my feet and fingers, I will know which ones need particular work to protect them."

Dr Tipton is convinced the data gathered before and after the expedition will prove extremely useful.

"The problems of these injuries are really long-term, and debilitating in terms of people's ability to go into the cold," he said.

"We have got the possibility of looking at someone here who has pretty severe cold injuries over the years."

"To add him to our list of patients will set a super benchmark for us."

"It's not often we get the chance to speak to someone we know in advance is going to push himself to the limit."

"It's a very useful exchange of information. We are going to find out physically and mentally what it takes to push yourself to extremes."

Professor Igor Mekjavic, an authority on cold air and cold water exposure who is working at the University of Portsmouth, is impressed by the level of expertise at the INM and university.

"A lot of people have converged here, and as an outsider I can say there's an incredible mix of researchers and facilities," he said.

"There is a very good balance, and I think it is probably right to say that it is among the world leaders in its field."



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Britain's warship in UN peace operation returns with memories of a human tragedy



'The lights of a column of 15 vehicles could be seen along the coastal road, their progress marked by the flames from buildings as they proceeded from village to village, burning as they went'



GLASGOW'S MISSION OF MERCY IN TIMOR

● ABOVE: Under Royal Marines protection, two small East Timoreans give the cameraman a relaxed wave alongside Mne Neil Blewett.

● BELOW: STD Emma Sandon makes a crowd of friends as she hands out jelly beans. Emma was assisting Surgeon-Lt Carty at a makeshift clinic for displaced people living in shanty settlements in the hills above Dili.

WITH THE thanks of the United Nations' Australian commander and Britain's Defence Secretary, HMS Glasgow has completed her work for the International Force in East Timor and is due to arrive home in Portsmouth on November 11.

On that day of remembrance, the joy of return will be tinged on board with thoughts of the people of East

Timor whose desperate plight has been witnessed at first hand by many members of the ship's company.

Paul Parrack, our correspondent on board told us: "As the destroyer patrolled

**Pictures: PO(PHOT)
Dave Coombs**

along the coast at night, turmoil could be observed with graphic effect through night-sight glasses as fires erupted, illuminating the hillsides.

"At one time the lights of a column of

around 15 vehicles, seemingly trucks and jeeps, could be seen travelling along the coastal road, their progress clearly marked by the flames from buildings as they proceeded from village to village, burning as they went."

When it was possible, the ship put ashore those personnel she could spare to do what they could to help the stretched UN force and the hungry, sick and distressed victims of the Indonesian militia.

In between sea duties to keep watch on Indonesian naval units, Glasgow's Lynx ferried ashore officers and sailors whose expertise was used to make more secure and more habitable the compound occupied by the British joint headquarters in the capital, Dili.

A few miles south of the town, in a shanty settlement in the foothills, the ship's doctor, Surgeon-Lt Jonathan Carty, and STD Emma Sandon went ashore with the Glasgow's eight-man Royal Marines detachment to set up a temporary clinic for people too frightened to return to their homes.

Working with a doctor from the Royal Gurkha Rifles, Lt Carty and Emma treated over 100 people – mostly mothers with young children. And using drugs brought ashore from the ship, they worked through a long, hot day, dealing with everything ranging from gunshot wounds to babies suffering from chest infections.

"It's been very different from what I expected," said Emma. "Really, it's been quite shocking. But it's a great feeling to know that we have been doing something to help."

While the medical work continued, the RM detachment kept watch with the Gurkhas from the hills above the shanty settlement.

The Marines' Commanding Officer, Capt Stephen Hart, said his men were in their element. He said: "We've all been very keen to get ashore on the ground in East Timor rather than just remain on

board within sight of all that's happening here."

Later in the deployment, Lt Carty was able to set up another clinic – this time in the village of Dare, and with STD Louise Penrose assisting him.

With a Gurkha doctor and a doctor from a Portuguese charity, they treated several hundred patients in the foyer of a church.

Meanwhile, the Marines provided drivers to help ferry people back to their homes in Dili – including prominent independence leaders – while the other members of the detachment stood guard with British Gurkha soldiers. And that night the Commandos carried out patrols of Dili in company with the Gurkhas.

Before she left East Timor, HMS Glasgow, under her CO, Cdr John King, was visited by the commander of the International Force (INTERFET), Australian Major-General Peter Cosgrove, and the commander of British

forces in the operation, Brigadier David Richards.

While on board, General Cosgrove addressed the ship's company and expressed appreciation for what the Glasgow had done.

Thanks came, too, from Defence Secretary George Robertson in London. He said Glasgow had carried out an invaluable role as part of INTERFET's maritime component, helping in the rapid deployment of effective forces on the ground.

"Her smooth and seamless integration with other ships of the Royal Australian Navy and other nations in the region was a model of co-operation and a tribute to the professionalism of the men and women on board."

"Now that her tasks are complete I wish her a safe and speedy return to the UK where her crew can be reunited with their families and enjoy a well-earned rest."



● Surgeon-Lt Jonathan Carty assists Oxfam doctors treating a Timorese gunshot victim at Dare.



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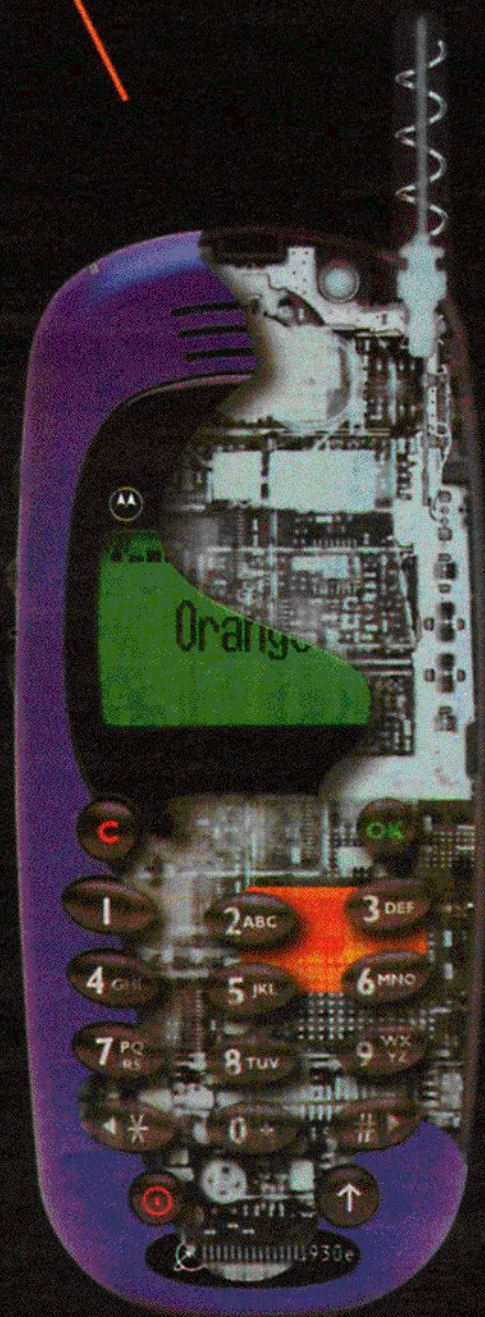
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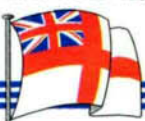


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● **STILL MARRIED:** Former RM Bandsman Len Lovell with his wife Barbara. They are pictured with the Rev Ian Naylor in the chapel where they married exactly 50 years ago.

Chapel revisited after 50 years of marriage

STAFF at HMS Excellent made sure that Len and Barbara Lovell's 50th wedding anniversary was almost as memorable as the day they were married.

The couple were married at St Barbara's, HMS Excellent, in 1949 and they returned to the Church to confirm their vows exactly 50 years later.

Len was a Royal Marines Bandsman and Barbara was a typist in the Experimental Department at HMS Excellent when they met at a Ship's Company dance in 1946.

Three years later they were married at St Barbara's and the couple were delighted to be able to revisit the Church for the ceremony conducted by HMS Excellent's Rev Ian Naylor half a century later.

During their visit the Lovells were brought up to date with the many changes at HMS Excellent on a tour guided by museum curator Lt Cdr Brian Witts and they were entertained to lunch in the Wardroom.

Aviator is left high and dry!

NAVAL AVIATOR Paul Glover was left high and dry by colleagues in 771 Squadron during his last ever flight with the Navy.

The Warrant Officer from Culdrose, who has retired after 34 years, was 'volunteered' to take part in a training exercise which saw him winched on to the top of Godrevy lighthouse!

Paul started his training at HMS St Vincent, Gosport, and made his first flight with 771 Squadron in 1971. Since then he has served with many different ships and squadrons and has recorded over 5,000 flying hours in his log book.

Paul, who lives with his wife Sue in Mawnan Smith, finally hung up his Fleet Air Arm flying overalls and helmet in favour of a civilian instructor's job at RN Air Station Culdrose.

Another aviation milestone was passed when 845 Squadron's Lt Glyn Price achieved his 3,000th flying hour.

The Royal Marines Lieutenant was flying in a low-level formation

of Sea Kings during a night-vision sortie over the Mediterranean with the Tailored Air Group in HMS Ocean, during exercise Argonaut.

Formerly a Gazelle and Lynx instructor with 847 NAS, Lt Price became the first SD Royal Marine Pilot to convert to the Sea King last July. After Exercise Argonaut, he will deploy to Bosnia with B Flight 845 NAS in support of the Implementation Force.



● **I'M UP HERE!** WO Paul Glover, who ended his last flight with 771 NAS on the top Godrevy Lighthouse.

Brothers in arms

SUBMARINERS like to think of themselves as part of one big happy family but for HMS Trafalgar's Neil and Paul Robinson it's actually true.

The pair are brothers and are believed to be the only siblings serving together at sea in the submarine flotilla.

Trafalgar's long-serving Chef Neil Robinson had the unique task of awarding dolphins to his younger brother Writer Paul Robinson when he joined the

submarine after eight years in the surface flotilla.

The brothers both sailed with HMS Trafalgar during her recent South Atlantic deployment and were able to sample the four-star delights of Port Canaveral during the Trafalgar's run ashore there.



● **3,000 hours:** Lt Price RM

Medics put to the test

SEVENTY officers and ratings of the RNR Medical Branch took part in a major casualty handling exercise on board HMS Bristol.

The exercise was witnessed by Medical Director General (Royal Navy) Surg Rear Admiral Ian Jenkins and was part of a two-week training period run by Surg Cdr Warren Luke from Fort Blockhouse.



● **Neil Robinson presents submariner's dolphins to his brother Paul Robinson. They are both serving in HMS Trafalgar.**



● **Medics John Mowbray and Jennie Wolfe attend to Fiona MacDougall while Surg Cdr Jonathan Turner, Surg Rear Admiral Jenkins and Surg Cdr Luke look on. Picture: Gary Davies**

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People in the News



IN BRIEF

TV challenge

ENGINEERS from HMS Sultan pitted their wits against a gang of bikers on the Channel 4 TV show *Scrapheap Challenge*.

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But they were beaten by the bikers in the final race after engine starting problems, an over-long propeller shaft and dubious steering led to disaster.

Sicilian MBE

FIFTEEN years of dedicated service to the Royal Navy has been recognised with the award of an honorary MBE to the Service's Sicilian agent Mimo Sciotto.

His most recent accomplishments include the success of three highly important operational visits by HMS Splendid during the Kosovo crisis, but his service is always above and beyond the terms of his contract.

Mimo, who is also famous for the success of his wardroom and SR parties, was presented with the honour by Captain Graham Wiltshire on board RFA Sir Percivale at Palermo.

£3,000 win



GREAT news awaited HMS Victorious's operator maintainer PJ Beautyman (above) when he returned from the boat's latest patrol.

While he was at sea his numbers came up in the RN/RM Sports Lottery and he won a top prize of £3,000!

OM Beautyman was presented with the cash by his CO, Cdr Peter McDonnell.

Back log

THE NAVY came to the rescue when a fallen tree blocked a stretch of the Grand Union Canal.

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The trio volunteered their services and they were quickly able to clear the large willow with bow and chain saws.

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THE MASTER of the Worshipful Company of Cooks was invited to spend a day with the RN to see how the Navy caters for its staff.

Mr Donald Hodgson's first call was to the galley of HMS Norfolk where he was in time to serve lunch with supply officer Lt Cdr Alison Towler. And after a visit to the RN Supply School to tour the Cookery, Catering and Steward Schools he said he was impressed cheerfulness and enthusiasm of all the staff that he had met.



● LEEDS CASTLE: WEM Terry Longrigg and MEM Terry Dyer at the balloon festival at Leeds Castle, Kent.

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Visitors were also delighted to see scale models of the past and present HMS Leeds Castle, built by Dick Curr from Chatham and Sid Skinner from Bromley, doing battle on the boating lake.



● Lt Cdr Kenealy presents the Bulawayo Trophy to Lt Cdr Clegg in the presence of POPT Steer and WO Johnson and expedition members CPO Jan Mayne, LCH Dicky Bird, LWEM Jason Wardleworth and WMEM Amanda Parkinson. Picture: SFP

Navy climber sets a new world record

NAVY DIVER Eamon Fullen is on top of the world after climbing the highest peaks in all 47 European countries – setting a brand new mountaineering world record.

Eamon's hopes of clinching the record last year were dashed when storms forced him back from the summit of Mount Shkara in Georgia (*Navy News*, September 1998).

Then a deployment with HMS Endurance meant that he had to wait another year before making his next attempt on the remote mountain which rises to 5,200 metres in the former Russian Republic.

After driving across Europe in a four-wheel-drive Camel Trophy vehicle provided by his Land Rover sponsors, he and his guide were again held up on Shkara by bad weather.

Eamon said: "The weather was really bad, we didn't see the sky for days and we had to wait. The climb usually takes five days but it took us 12. We ran out of food but there was no way we were coming down."

The day after their rations were finally exhausted the weather eased off a little and Eamon made it to the summit and back safely, albeit nine kilos lighter than when he set out!

Shkara was Eamon's 46th European conquest and it left just one more mountain to secure the new world record beyond doubt – Turkey's Mount Ararat.

Ararat is 5,137m high but it's considered an easy climb by experienced mountaineers, with access to the mountain being the real difficulty. Turkey's internal security problems mean that the region is closed to foreigners and Ararat has not been officially climbed since 1992.

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Summit photos taken by Eamon and letters left at the top of Ararat by Russian climbers are being examined by *The Guinness Book of Records* and his achievement is expected to be recognised in the 2000 edition.

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The details are being kept under wraps while he negotiates unpaid leave for his next adventure but he promises it will be "bigger, badder and a lot more dangerous" than his European exploits. Watch this space...

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RESERVISTS from HMS Sherwood provided a uniformed presence at the launch of the RNLI's latest inshore lifeboat the 'Pride of Sherwood.'

The new Atlantic 75 was bought and paid for by the people of Nottinghamshire and the dedication service was held on the banks of the River Trent in Nottingham.

Pictured (right) with the new vessel are MSA Paula Berry, Seaman Alistair Dean, ANN Catherine Richards and Seaman Andrew Osbourne, who are all from the Reserve Training Centre in Nottingham's Chalfont Drive.



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The expedition, organised in the Spring by Endurance's POPT Dean Steer, was selected by Fleet Recreation Officer Lt Cdr Tim Kenealy as the best of over 50 entries competing for the title and the prestigious Bulawayo Trophy.

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With the aid of a guide, the team completed the 33km trail in just 44 hours. Tourist groups usually spend three days on the trek, with the porters carrying the bulk of their equipment.

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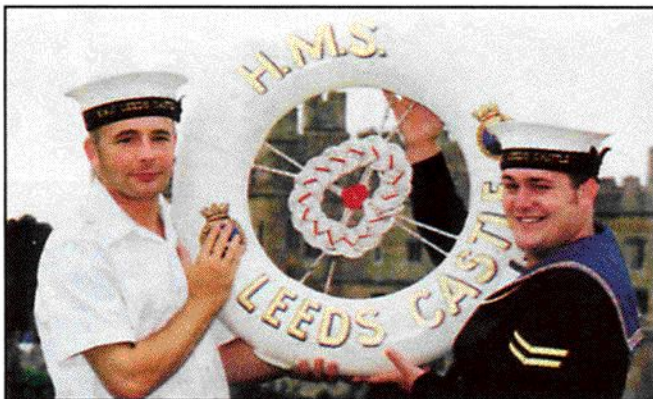
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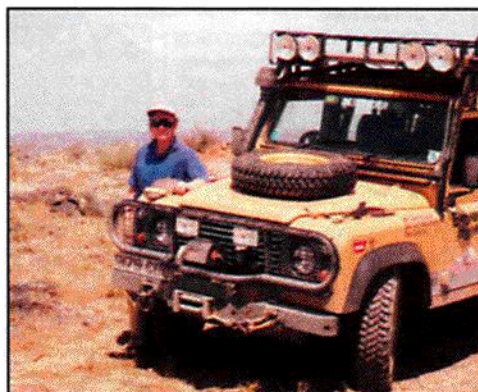
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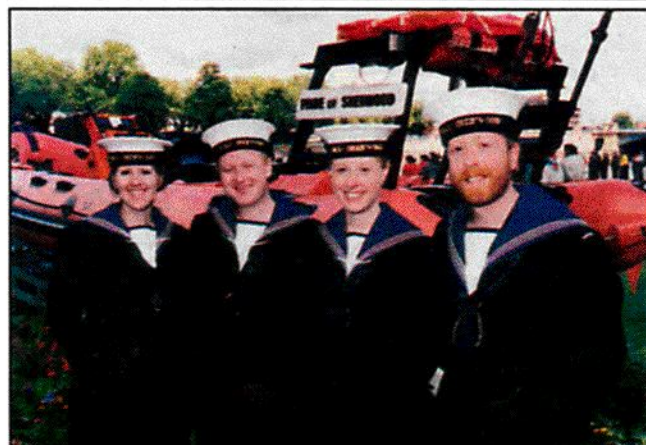
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● Long away – HMS Scott returns to Devonport.



Scott scans hidden depths of the ocean

GREAT swathes of the ocean floor have been brought into sharp focus, thanks to a marathon deployment by the Navy's largest survey vessel.

HMS Scott has returned from a year-long deployment, during which she mapped an area equal in size to the British Isles, Denmark, Holland and Belgium combined.

She was able to complete one of the Navy's longest peacetime

deployment in over 30 years using a three-watch manning system.

The vessel is run by 42 of the ship's company of 63, while the remainder is on leave.

Each crew member works 75 days in the ship before having 30 days off, allowing Scott to spend more than 300 days at sea.

She started off the south-west coast, determining the extent of the UK's continental shelf.

Scott then passed through the

Mediterranean and Suez Canal to the Indian Ocean to begin the largest and most productive survey of the region ever achieved.

The ship's Swathe Array Sonar System is capable of surveying 180 square kilometres per hour in depths of 4,000 metres.

Scott's Commanding Officer, Cdr Trevor Horne, said: "The surfaces of Mars and Venus are better mapped than the deep ocean sea beds of the Earth."

"With Scott's surveying capability, we can map those sea beds faster and more accurately than was ever possible before."

Scott visited Dubai, Muscat and the Seychelles, but remained on task over Christmas.

After a spell of maintenance in Gibraltar she spent the summer in the Atlantic, ranging as far as Madeira, Halifax and Vigo.

Scott will be in her home base of Devonport for maintenance and training until she deploys for a 13-month programme in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.



Frigate pays historic visit to remote island

HMS SOMERSET is believed to be the first British warship to visit the volcanic Ilha da Trinidade in more than 100 years.

The island lies 765 miles east of Rio de Janeiro, and its only inhabitants are a party of 62 men of the Brazilian Navy.

The British last occupied the island in 1895 to establish a submarine cable station for communications between Britain and Argentina, but left in 1897 after strong representations from Brazil.

Once a haven for pirates – there is rumoured to be treasure buried ashore – the island has been visited by astronomer Edmund Halley (1700) and James Cook (1775).

Somerset landed a party of six

officers and ratings for a couple of hours, and they were shown around by the Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Machado.

The Type 23's Commanding Officer, Cdr The Honourable Michael Cochrane, said: "It is a great privilege for me to be able to bring HMS Somerset to this dramatic island."

"The island does not receive many visitors, and I was warmly welcomed by Lt Cdr Machado and his team."

"The visit to our Brazilian naval colleagues, who work at the important weather station based here, is a clear indication of the strong relationship between our two navies."

Belfast honours wartime hero

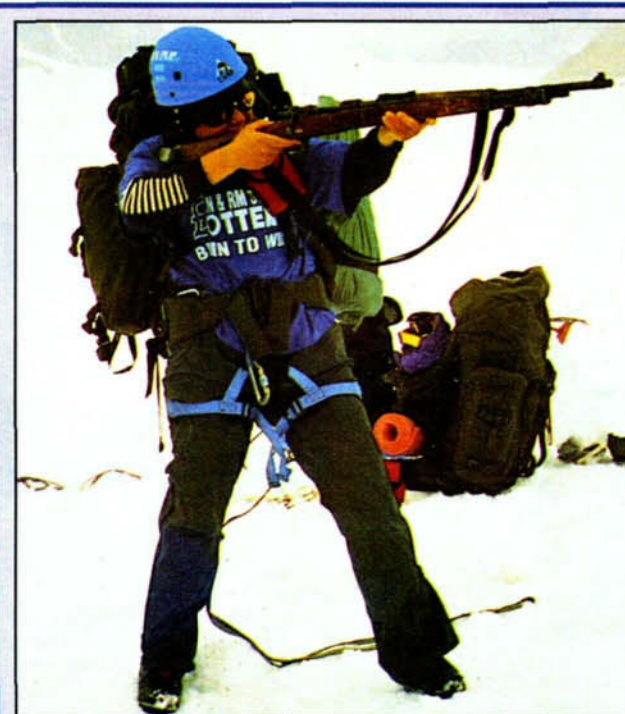
THE ONLY man from Northern Ireland to be awarded the Victoria Cross during the Second World War has been honoured at a ceremony in Belfast.

LS James Magennis gained the decoration for his courage as a crew member of a midget submarine which planted limpet mines on Japanese ships in Singapore in the summer of 1945.

The Lord Mayor of Belfast, Cllr Bob Stoker, unveiled the Portland stone and bronze memorial in the grounds of the city hall, watched by Magennis's Commanding Officer, Cdr Ian Fraser – who was also awarded the VC – and members of Magennis's family. The memorial comes as a result of a campaign for recognition by a Royal Navy veteran, George Fleming.

● Tribute – Cdr Ian Fraser and Cllr Bob Stoker with the new memorial to James Magennis.

Picture: Harrison Photography.



● Bear essential – S/Lt Louise Thatcher practises with the expedition team's anti-polar bear rifle in Spitzbergen. Louise was part of Expedition Frozen Summits, climbing high peaks on the Arctic island only 600 miles from the North Pole, and where the five members had to be constantly alert to the dangers of polar bears and hidden crevasses. The other four adventurers were Cdr Brian Pancott, Lt Ian Pears, LAEA Steve Bright and LWEM(R) Kenny Kenworthy. The expedition was supported by a major grant from the RN & RM Sports Lottery.

Paddlers tackle the Alps

A NAVY paddler helped give this year's Joint Services Alpine kayak meet a truly tri-Service spread.

Lt Craig Jordan was the only member of the RN on the trip, based in Landeck, Austria.

The aim of the meet was to allow military paddlers to improve their kayaking skills on demanding Alpine rivers, starting at relatively easy grade 2/3 rivers to grade 6 for

the foolhardy.

There was also a chance to gain qualifications, including the White Water Safety course.

Anyone keen to join next year's meet – date and location to be arranged – should be proficient (minimum BCU 3 star or JS Inland Proficiency).

For further details, contact Lt Jordan on 01462 752711.



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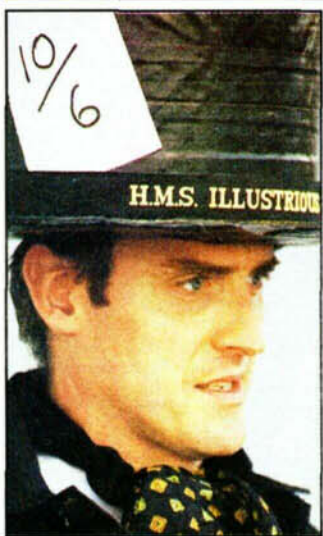
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Helping Hands



Cash pours in from charity brew-ups



● Silly hat, serious cause – PO Regulator Stephen (Jack) Hawkins in HMS Illustrous.

Navy takes tea breaks

MEN and women of the Royal Navy have enjoyed an unusual range of tea and coffee breaks to help boost charity coffers.

SSAFA Forces Help held their Big Brew-Up to raise both awareness and cash for the charity, which helps serving and ex-Service personnel and their families in need.

And hot on its heels was the Macmillan Cancer Relief 'World's

Biggest Coffee Morning.'

Among those which took part, aircraft carrier HMS Illustrous organised a Mad Hatter It's a Knockout tea party at sea.

Twenty teams paid an entry fee entitling them to a sticky bun, and they then had to survive the journey through Wonderland, involving chasing rabbits, sliding down burrows and talking riddles.

The event raised more than £250, and the Teletubbies beat the SAS to the fancy dress prize.

HMS Collingwood's event was in the Chaplaincy coffee bar, with 99 cups of tea yielding £105, while the Defence Helicopter Support Authority at Yeovilton raised £116.

One of the biggest parties was at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, where guests at T-Day included Prince Michael of Kent and Sooty.

Overseas bases got in on the act, particularly those in Cyprus, where events included tea-dancing in Akrotiri, sky-divers dropping in for a drink at Dhekelia, and a morning of tea and Scotch pies at Episkopi.

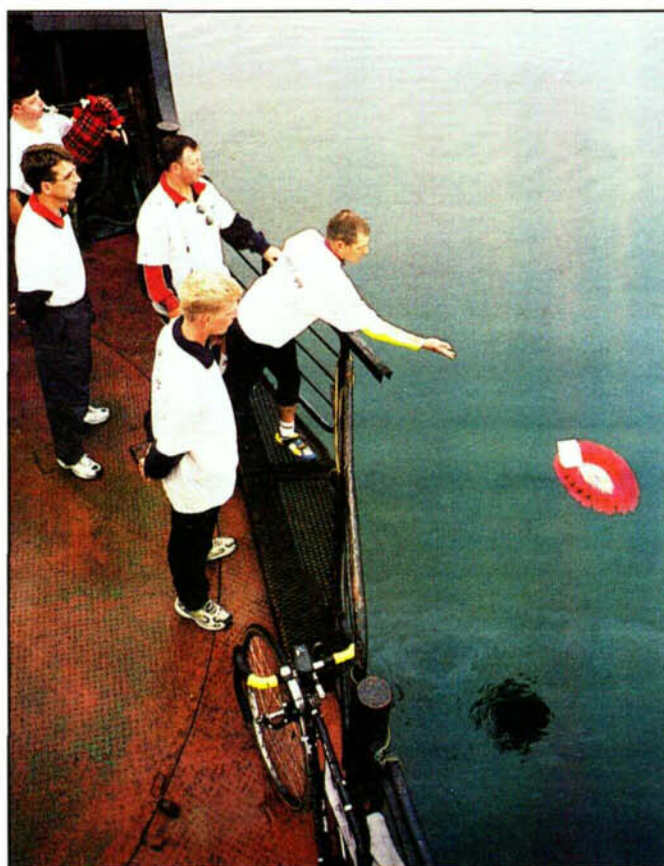
The final figure for the Big Brew-Up had not been calculated as Navy News went to press, but the last such event, in 1997, raised £110,000, and organisers are hoping to surpass that this time.

The Directorate of Foreign and Commonwealth Training held a coffee and cakes break for the Macmillan appeal at HMS Nelson, and raised £150 through refreshments and a raffle.

Going a bundle

BRUTE strength and determination by students at Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth made short work of a mountain of clothing destined for Kosovo.

Members of Upholder Division, St Vincent Squadron, led by Divisional Officer Lt Mark Malley, stepped in to help local aid co-ordinator Mrs Heather Harris shift the bundles from one storage unit to another before it was shipped by road to the Balkans.



● Not forgotten – PO Kevin Cave drops a wreath in Cromarty Firth during the round-Scotland cycle trip.

1,999 miles for a Scottish hospital

THREE men raised more than £41,000 for an ex-Servicemen and women's hospital by cycling 1,999 miles around Scotland – and they paid tribute to war victims en route.

The trio – PO Kevin Cave, based at Faslane, Pte Ricky Foster of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, and George Ross, former KOSB and now Royal British Legion Scotland – made the trip under the title Force 99.

During the three-week trip, when they averaged around 100 miles a day, they lay wreaths at

nearly 200 war memorials along the way.

The event started in Orkney and ended in Edinburgh.

One wreath-laying commemorated the loss of HMS Natal, which exploded in Cromarty Firth with the loss of 400 lives in 1915 when her magazine blew up.

The Erskine Hospital is being rebuilt as part of a £16 million package, and will become 180-bed centre of nursing care excellence.

It was built in 1916 to cope with Scottish casualties of the Great War, and has treated more than 60,000 patients over the years.

Just being there ...

STRANGERS at the start of the week, inseparable oppos at the end – past and present sailors epitomise the spirit of the Joint Service Hosanna House group's week in Lourdes.

LOM Ian Congleton, of HMS Vanguard, said the whole thing is best described as "just being there for somebody."

And that somebody, in Ian's

case, was ex-POMEM Brian Ackland, of Plymouth, one of the group of disabled ex-Servicemen and women.

If one of the disabled guests wanted to go somewhere, it was Ian's job, along with other willing hands, to make it happen – a good example of the old buddy system.

For more information about the week, contact CPONN Gary Wright, B3 Ward, RH Haslar, Gosport, Hampshire.

In Brief

Home help

A CHILDREN'S home in Gibraltar has been helped by the local families club.

A cheque for £407 was handed to the Bishop Healy Home by Commodore Andrew Willmetts, Commander British Forces Gibraltar, on behalf of the Phoenix Families Club.

Island race

RN and RM staff have been invited to join The Island Race next year, when a series of runners will cover 4,500 miles around Britain. Finding 30 people to represent a mess or unit in one of the 100 legs could help raise up to £3 million.

Contact Richard Haldane, Cloan, Auchterarder, Perthshire PH3 1PP, or Stuart Nussey, 34, Hillhouse Rd, Edinburgh EH4 2AG, tel 0131 332 9410 or see the website (www.theislandrace.com).

Pulling in cash

A CHARITY boat pull on the Rivers Lynher and Tamar, co-ordinated by MAA Topsy Turner at the RN Provost HQ, HMS Drake, raised more than £1,000 for charity.

On the hoof

A HORSE racing evening organised by an RN senior rate at an RAF station has raised more than £700.

CPO Bob Yeomans, of 705 Naval Air Squadron, was behind the event at RAF Shawbury, attended by 150 members and supporters of the Wrekin and District branch of the FAA Association and Shrewsbury branch of the RNA, along with members of the Sergeants' Mess.

The £715 was split between the associations and the mess charitable fund.

Free wheels

THE HMS SULTAN summer show has provided a new fully-fitted van for Hampshire's Bobby Appeal, which provides a free home security and repair service for elderly and vulnerable victims of crime.

March masters

HMS KING Alfred took the trophy for best RNR unit in the City of Chichester International March – and the seven-strong team also raised £270 for St Dunstons, the home for blind and disabled ex-Service personnel.

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If you're in the **Forces** there's a fast way to make contact with a solicitor who'll speak **your** language. The Forces Legal Network is a national group of established, independent solicitors who all provide:

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● Memories – fun-runners from Victory Building, Second Sea Lord's headquarters in Portsmouth, recalled summers past when they raised money by running 1.5 miles in their lunch-break for the Rachel Madocks School for children and students with severe learning difficulties.

IN BRIEF

Japanese visitors

A DELEGATION from the Japanese navy visited RN Air Station Culdrose to take a close look at the Navy's new multi-mission Merlin helicopter.

Culdrose CO, Commodore Tony Hogg, and Tokyo Defence Attaché Capt Neil Robertson, were the escorts for a Japanese navy and defence industry party led by Rear Admiral Tsutomu Taguchi during their visit to the Intensive Flying Trials Unit 700M.

After a close look at the Merlin itself they were given a comprehensive brief on engineering and trials before touring air station training, workshop, stores and repair facilities.

Lynx link with Brazil

RNAS Yeovilton has been playing a key role in the training of Super-Lynx pilots from Brazil.

The air station has trained more than half of the Rio-based pilots in its Lynx flight simulator, allowing them to practice for emergency situations which are too dangerous to recreate in the air.

Brazilian officer Lt Cdr Carneiro Da Silva said: "This has been the most valuable flying training I have received in 18 years of operating the Lynx."

US honour

THE US Navy has awarded a Commendation Medal to Lt Jerry Duncan from RNAS Culdrose.

Lt Duncan was serving on exchange with in San Diego and the award was for his outstanding work in pre-flight training for Forward Looking Infra-red Radar, Hellfire air-to-ground missiles and helicopter anti-submarine warfare.



● TEST FLIGHT: The experimental VAAC Harrier prepares to land

Helicopters brought under one command

MORE THAN 12,000 personnel and over 350 helicopters are to be brought under a single command with the launch of a new Joint Helicopter Command at Wilton near Salisbury.

The new outfit will bring peace-time control of all of Britain's battlefield helicopters together for the first time.

Included are the Navy's Commando Helicopter Force, all operational Army Air Corps aircraft, all Royal Air Force support helicopters, and the new 16 Air Assault Brigade. They will all come under the Command of JHCHQ on 1 April.

The move reflects the increasingly vital role which helicopters play on the modern battlefield and is designed to help co-ordinate planning, training and resources across all three Services to ensure

maximum support for land, special forces and amphibious operations.

At the launch of the new command, which saw the unveiling of the first all-new British Apache attack helicopter, Armed Forces Minister John Spellar said: "The 21st Century will demand new ways of working from our Armed Forces."

"The Army, Navy and Air Force, while superbly capable in their individual disciplines, are even more effective when they work together."

The JHC will have an annual budget of £300 million and will control assets worth £1.4 billion.

LUSTY TRIALS FLY BY WIRE HARRIER

TEST PILOTS have been conducting trials with a new system which could radically reduce the work load on Harrier pilots during launch and recovery.

The VSTOL Aircraft Active Control System allows airmen to control the aircraft using two 'interceptors' rather than the throttle, nozzle and stick of the conventional Harrier, with the aim of incorporating the system in the proposed Joint Strike Fighter.

To test the system, the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) have converted a T Mk2/4 two-seater Harrier where much of the rear cockpit is filled with research controls and equipment.

And it made its first landing at sea on HMS Illustrious, in the capable hands of Flt Lt John Lawson (RAF) and Lt Phil Hayde RN from the fast jet test squadron at Boscombe Down.

Visit strengthens ties with rescue services

AIRMEN in 771 Naval Air Squadron have been forging even stronger links with the emergency services personnel they work with during search and rescue operations.

The Culdrose-based squadron has been hosting a series of visits by paramedics from the Westcountry Ambulance Service which has seen them taking part in rescue sorties as well as spending time with the crews on the ground.

Lt Cdr Peter Richings, CO of 771, said: "The visits have provided very valuable professional training opportunities for both sides and have enabled us to have a better understanding of their equipment, with the ultimate aim of providing potential to offer a better service to all casualties."



● COCKPIT: Jet Provost T3 XN 573 on display at Newark. The Air Museum is keen to attract new exhibitors.

Picture: R Blackmore

Museum calls all cockpit collectors

HAVE YOU got an aircraft cockpit?

It may seem like an odd question but there are growing numbers of aviation enthusiasts who buy up old airframes and renovate the cockpits as hobby.

If you own a cockpit and can get it into tip-top condition by the Spring then Newark Air Museum would like to hear from you.

The Museum, which has an impressive collection of its own, is going to hold an 'Aircraft Cockpit Meet' on the Winthorpe Airfield near the County Showground and it would like to attract as many exhibitors as possible.

For details, contact Bill O'Sullivan, Cockpit Meet, Newark Air Museum, Winthorpe, Newark, Notts NG24 2NY as soon as possible.

Merlin makes London debut

THE ROYAL Navy played a starring role in the biggest defence sales exhibition ever held in Britain.

Visitors to Defence Sales and Equipment International (DSEI) had the chance to visit two of the Service's newest vessels after HMS Grafton and HMS Grimsby berthed in London's West India dock.

And the Merlin helicopter made its London debut when Cdr Phil Shaw of 700M Squadron landed on the back of the Type 23 frigate which recently returned from operations in the Adriatic.

At the exhibition's main site at DERA Chertsey, delegates were updated on developments at the cutting edge of Naval technology

with displays on the Astute-class nuclear submarine, the Future Carrier Programme, Joint Strike Fighter, and new generation frigates and destroyer programmes.

Static displays included the Lynx flight from HMS Boxer and a full-scale mock-up of the Merlin Mk III utility helicopter.

DSEI was opened by Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon's predecessor George Robertson, who underlined the Government's commitment to strict export controls.

The exhibition replaces three former shows including the Royal Navy and British Army Equipment Exhibition. Over 900 manufacturers from 25 countries took part.



● A Merlin helicopter from 700M Intensive Flying Trials Unit at RN Air Station Culdrose lands on HMS Grafton in West India dock at the start of DSEI 1999. Picture: Lockheed Martin

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Old enemies join in Londonderry commemoration

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THE SPIRIT of reconciliation promises to make the 55th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic a memorable weekend for Londonderry in May.

Invitations have been issued by the Londonderry branch of the Royal Naval Association, who are organising the event, to allies and former enemies in the hope that everyone involved will be represented in Northern Ireland.

It is hoped that the commemoration will be the largest to date.

"We have invited all the navies that were stationed here during the war to return to join with us in our weekend-long commemorations and celebrations," said co-organiser Ken Kerr.

"Those navies come from Canada, the United States, Norway, India, Poland, France, Belgium, Russia, the Netherlands



Convoy escorts alongside in Londonderry. The inbound ship in the foreground is base guardship HMS Foxglove.

and, of course, the Royal Navy. "Those commemorations will see for the first time the involvement of our former adversaries, the German and Italian navies, invited in the spirit of reconciliation - former enemies now united in defending peace in Europe.

"We have also invited the Irish navy - they are our neighbours, and men of theirs died in the wars."

Ken said the entire community of Northern Ireland has been given the opportunity to join in.

Schools can enter a poster competition based on the Battle of the

Atlantic, and there will be a parade of floats and bands looking back to the war and into the new millennium.

Visiting VIPs will judge competitions, and Mr Kerr said the Mayor of Londonderry and city councillors fully support the plans, while local hotels are offering special rates for veterans visiting the commemorations. Stena Line is offering special rates for coaches or minibuses taking participants to Londonderry.

The draft programme for the weekend, on May 5 to 8, includes a reception for visiting ships on the Friday, a parade of floats and ships

open to visitors on the Saturday, and a memorial service and RAF fly-past on the Sunday.

If anyone would like more details, or wishes to take part, they should contact Mr Kerr at the Services Club, 125, Spencer Road, Londonderry, or telephone 01504 284188, 0403 344971, or e-mail john@pc-heaven.freemove.co.uk

Londonderry was one of the main naval bases for Atlantic convoy escorts, supporting more than 160 ships from ten navies, and the city was home to 40,000 sailors.

There were also five air stations in the area, including RN air stations Gannet and Shrike.

Around the Branches

Lymington

Branch president, Shipmate Robin Tubbs, presented life membership to Shipmate A. S. Brown, social secretary for 12 years - six with Greenford branch. Shipmate Sidney Wearn was awarded the retiring standard bearer's certificate for his seven years' service, and certificates of appreciation went to Shipmates Joan Wearn - treasurer for eight years - and Violet Brown for her assistance to the social secretary.

Telford

Falling membership and infirmity has forced the closure of the branch, the £6,590 charity fund being disbursed to Princess Royal Hospital Coronary Care Unit (£2,000), No. 8 Area welfare fund (£750), six Naval and local charities (£500 each), Telford Sea Cadet unit (£440) and the Royal British Legion (£400).

Port Phillip Bay

The first Australian uckers competition has been fought out by teams from Melbourne and Geelong branches, former members of the WRNS, Royal Marines,

submariners and old boys from HMS St Vincent and HMS Ganges.

Finalists were the Royals and Ganges boys, the latter winning the trophy thanks to the skills of Shipmates John Hannant and Charles Brewster.

Liss & District

Shipmates Simon Sillence and Eric Hartley - No. 3 Area and Liss standard bearers respectively - took part in the parade of Naval standards at the last Royal Tournament. Fifty members of the branch were there to watch them.

On the way home they were entertained by Basingstoke branch.

The Liss standard has been paraded at a Sea Sunday service at Littlehampton and Guildford, at a mayoral service at Aldershot and a Last Night of the Proms at Woking. It was also due to be paraded at the RNA biennial remembrance service in Whitehall on October 24.

Frinton & Walton

Two members of the branch accompanied by their wives took part with 2,400 serving and ex-serving personnel in the annual Veterans Parade in Weymouth. Fifty members and friends attended a social evening hosted by Thurrock branch who are due to attend Frinton & Walton's branch dance on December 18.

Cork & County

Shipmate Tom Ratcliffe had the holiday of a lifetime in Australia thanks to the kindness of shipmates in Sydney, Perth and Fremantle. At the invitation of Sydney branch chairman, Shipmate Jim Seager, he took part with RN ship associations in the Anzac Day parade.

In Perth he was given a VIP tour of the city, conducted by Shipmate Ivan Hunter, and was given a warm welcome by Shipmate Ken Peberdy in Fremantle.

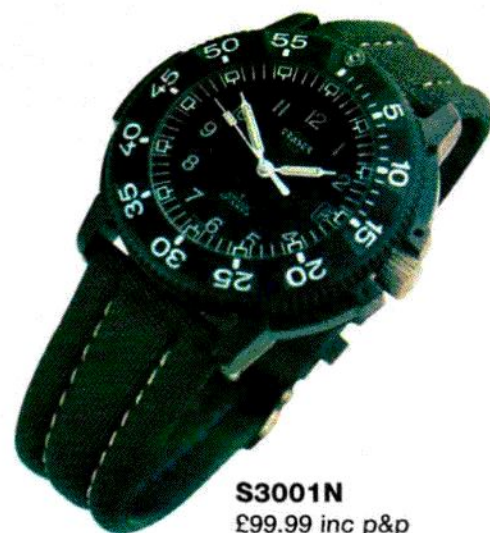
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PICTURE PUZZLE

WINNING ENTRY in our September competition was sent in by I. E. Rothwell of Windermere, Cumbria.

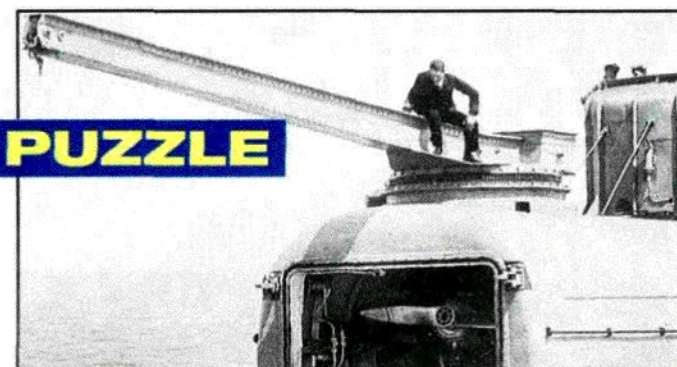
He identified the mystery picture as that of the cruiser HMS Liverpool (1937-58).

For the £30 prize he also named as Calabria the first World War II battle involving capital ships in the Mediterranean and which Liverpool was an escorting cruiser. For another £30 name the vessel in the picture from which this detail was taken.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Closing date for entries is December 15. More than one entry can be submitted, but photocopies cannot be accepted.

Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned. The winner will be announced in our January edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.



MYSTERY PICTURE 57

Name

Address

My answer



Names of Lydney's 27 set in stone



THE 27 SERVICEMEN of Lydney who gave their lives during the Second World War have now received a permanent memorial, unveiled at a dignified and moving ceremony by the life vice president of the Gloucestershire town's RNA branch, Shipmate Mary Watts.

Previously Lydney's 1939-45 war dead were commemorated by 27 rose bushes in Bathurst Park. But problems over upkeep led the RNA to propose an alternative – a Forest of Dean boulder that will retain its fresh look

through all weathers.

Before the unveiling in the park, the Roll of Honour was read by Lydney RNA branch chairman, Shipmate Keith Foster; by Royal British Legion branch chairman, Bill Johns; and by the president of the RAF Association, Wing Cdr Eric Higgs.

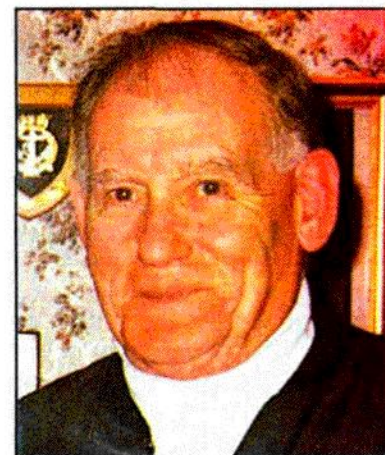
A wreath was laid by the president of Lydney RNA, Shipmate Arthur Beverstock and the Kohima Epitaph was read by the chairman of the Forest of Dean Burma Star Association, Les Harper. The service was conducted by the RNA branch padre, the Rev Patricia Pinkerton.

Stan scoops a flyaway prize

LUCKY winner of two British Airways Club-class return tickets to anywhere in the world – plus £3,000 spending money – is Shipmate Stan Gould of Stoke-on-Trent and District branch.

His holiday of a lifetime was top prize in a raffle at the last Royal Tournament. It was won by the branch and then raffled among the members. A delighted Stan was presented with his prize by the branch vice chairman, Shipmate Vic Foster.

Stan (73) is an ex-submariner who served in 1944-57. He plans to take his sister on a family visit to Australia.



● Shipmate Stan Gould – tickets to fly anywhere.

Doha, star of the East

A POPULAR port of call for Royal Navy ships in the Gulf is the thriving RNA branch of Doha in Qatar.

What makes it a home from home for visiting sailors is the welcome and generous hospitality they receive from members, including invites to their homes and a full diary of social events.

Among those that have visited this year are officers and sailors from HM ships *Invincible*, *Beaver*, *Boxer* and the RFAs *Brambleleaf* and *Orangeleaf*.

The generosity of the 40-member branch also extends to regular and large charitable contributions, the most recent being £1,500 for the RNA Central Charities Fund.

Since the branch's formation ten years ago, its members stage a raffle at each of their meetings – held two or three times a month. Fund-raising is also helped by Trafalgar Nights, May balls and the sale of diaries, mugs and other items.

"I suppose we are in a unique position compared with UK branches," said the secretary, Shipmate Bob Hall. "We have a captive membership so to speak, but there is also a steady rate of members leaving due to their contracts ending."

So recruiting is important – and the branch is well served by their public relations officer, Wing Cdr Phil Keating, the British Defence Attache.

POW campaigner almost died in Japanese camp



● Shipmate George Bristow – still suffering.

ONE OF the stalwarts involved in the Royal British Legion campaign to secure compensation for former Japanese prisoners of war is RNA Enfield branch member Shipmate George Bristow.

George (79) was a stoker mechanic taken prisoner in Hong Kong on Christmas Day 1941 after the loss of the ships HMS Robin and HMS Tern.

He was put to work on Kaitak military airfield, working 12 hours a day on just two bowls of rice. Two years later he was shipped to Japan, surviving a four-day train journey without food, water or sanitation.

There he was forced to work building a magnesium furnace, but just before the end of the war, he collapsed, suffering from tuberculosis and a perforated lung. He was dragged off to sick quarters from where he was eventually liberated by American forces.

On his release he was given his first square meal in years, but he collapsed again before he could eat it and was in a coma for two weeks.

In any event, in his weakened state the food would probably have killed him.

Still suffering from the effects of his treatment at the hands of the Japanese, George does all he can to promote the continuing struggle to gain compensation. Anyone wishing to support the campaign should write to: Head of Public Affairs, The Royal British Legion, 48 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JY.

In Brief

THOUGH far from the sea, Tenbury Wells branch is very active and has lately undertaken a wide range of activities including an evening at the old BBC transmitter station social club at Wofferton, and a barbecue hosted by Shipmate and Mrs Ken Parkes. Members attended Hereford church parade at Ross-on-Wye.

BEXHILL-on-Sea branch has transferred to Area 2 to be nearer its neighbouring branches of Eastbourne and Hastings. Shipmates Arthur Ellis and Jack Clarke have been elected president and vice president respectively.

MEMBERS of Mitcham, Morden and Wimbledon welcomed shipmates of Chatham and York branches when they were in London. The growing branch recently recruited eight new members.

MEMBERS of Chichester were pleased to welcome Perth (Western Australia) branch member, Shipmate John Power during his visit to UK. Plaques were exchanged with the ex-submariner, and promises made to keep in touch.

CHAIRMAN of Wallsend branch, Shipmate J. G. Shanks, presented £250 to the Marie Curie cancer charity, thanks to the proceeds of a sponsored run by shipmates around Coniston Water.

WOKING branch raised £722 in a street collection, the money going to their charity fund.

SHIPMATE Gerald Hacken of Brentwood branch has been made a life member in recognition of his 25 years' service to the RNA, including 16 years as branch delegate.

IN RECOGNITION of his long service as Hereford branch's 'Jack Dusty', Shipmate Trevor Taylor was made honorary life vice president. The certificate was presented by the chairman, Shipmate Nigel Trigg.

A SUPPER dance organised by Wigston & District branch was attended by 130 shipmates and guests. They included members of Market Harborough branch, and Leicester branches of the Submarine Old Comrades Association and Royal Marines Association. The supper was provided by the ladies of the branch.

RNA standards are being invited to the parade of standards at the Birmingham International Tattoo on November 27-28. Details from Tony Clarkson, 33 Feiashill Road, Trysull, Wolverhampton WV5 7HN.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

I wonder... "Have I forgotten anyone?"

THE QUEEN ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL HOME, a registered charity, provides a permanent home with medical care for disabled ex-servicemen. Anyone who has served in HM Forces at any time or in any capacity and requires residential nursing care is eligible for admission. While most of the 60 residents are long term, ex-servicemen are also welcomed for convalescence after hospital treatment or to provide short-term respite for carers. We keep the costs as low as possible, and depend on donations and legacies to subsidise fees. Please help to make their life more comfortable by giving a donation or remembering Gifford House in your Will.

If you would like more information about the Queen Alexandra Hospital Home or would like to arrange a visit, please contact the Chief Executive.

1919 80 years of dedicated service 1999

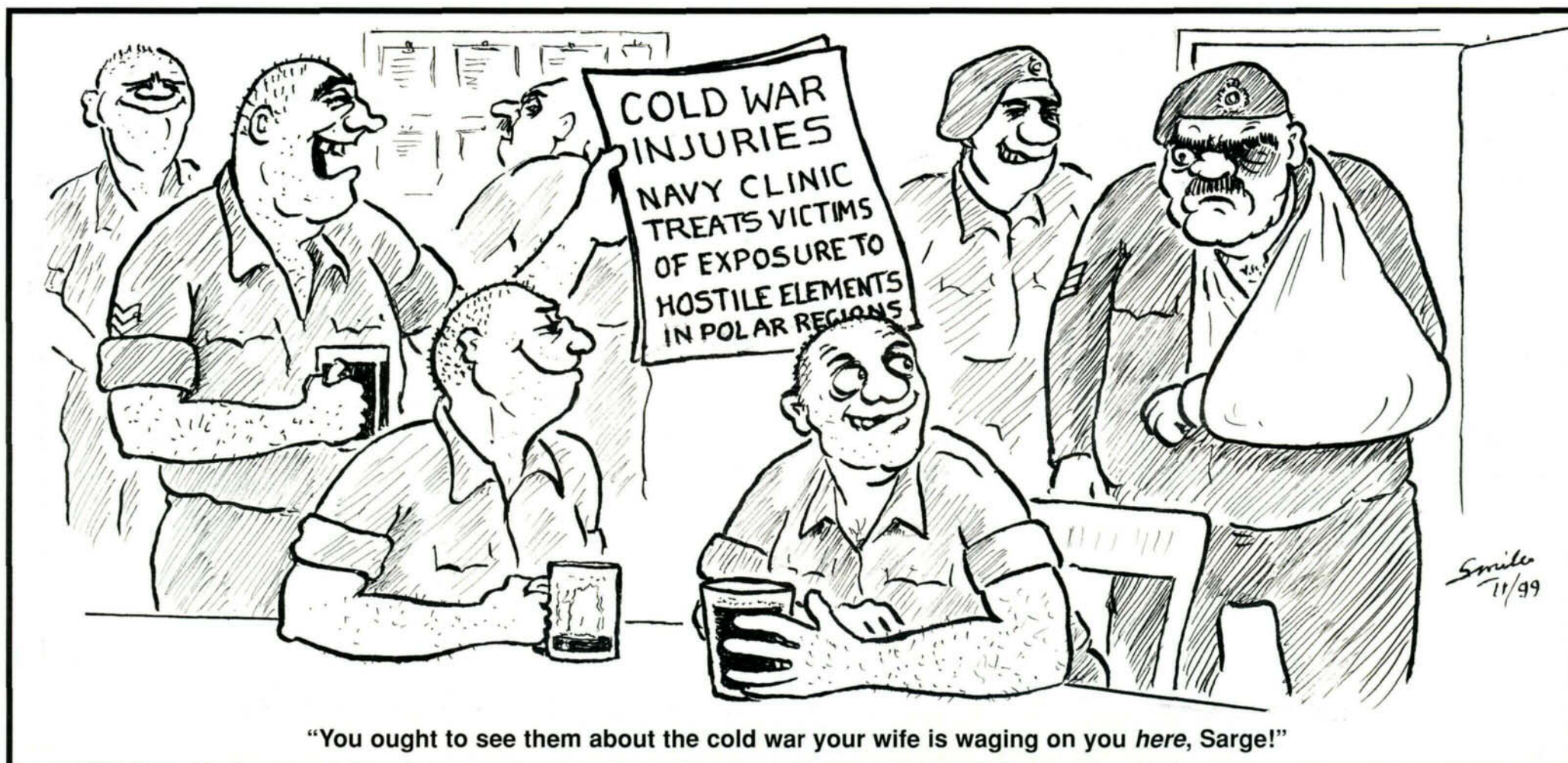


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Residents of the Queen Alexandra Hospital Home remember their comrades in arms.



"You ought to see them about the cold war your wife is waging on you here, Sarge!"

NEWSVIEW

Llandudno trains well livened up

LAST month I was privileged to be invited as guest of honour to the 12th reunion of the HMS Ocean Association at Llandudno.

I travelled up by train, and at one point a crowd of Millwall football supporters invaded my First Class carriage. I was its sole occupant, but they were no trouble and curiously, knowing their fearsome reputation, I didn't feel threatened by their presence at all.

Several of them apologised for the intrusion – "You don't mind us being here, do you mate?"

Well, I wasn't disposed to argue. Seeing as there was no room for them elsewhere, and since most of them, apparently, had paid for their tickets, I felt they had a point.

Half the trains I travel on these days are half empty and the other half crammed to bursting.

At the next station the police came on board. They always say you're getting older when the cops look younger – and these looked like they were hardly out of short pants. But they swiftly secured a rapport with the soccer fans and a lot of good-humoured backchat ensued.

When the lads disembarked at Oxford, they did so past a posse of stony-faced senior police officials who looked upon them with disfavour – but they kept their dignity, walking away straight-backed with an odd sense of pride.

When I finally got to Llandudno I found a similar situation a couple of generations removed. Here was a boisterous, good-humoured crowd of superannuated lads (with their long-suffering but hugely supportive wives in tow) prepared to celebrate their youthful past into the small hours.

Last to leave the bar, along with me, was a retired admiral who, lately not in the best of health, had made the trip to be with his old shipmates.

I travelled back home with him the next day and he entertained me with a succession of fascinating stories about shipboard life in the immediate post-war era. We discussed the current world scene too, and I found his views sane and sound and imbued with a liberal – that is, neither strict nor rigorous and without prejudice – dose of common sense that must have stood him in good stead in his dealings with Navy people over the many years of his service.

I was reminded of an interview I once had with a World War II submarine skipper who made the point that the "scamps" that made up a sizeable slice of his ship's company were "absolutely the sort of chaps you wanted with you in a war – they were only branded as scamps because they were bursting out of their skins with energy. More often than not, they turned out to be the most valuable members of the crew."

One of the HMS Ocean Association people I'd talked to at Llandudno told me a harrowing tale of a winter march he'd made out of Danzig as a POW, in the course of which he and his comrades were forced to lay an aircraft runway. As a gesture of defiance they had buried their spades under the concrete. "No spade, no food!" their irate guard yelled at them when he discovered his loss.

His leathery old face split wide as he recalled the episode – and somehow I knew the Millwall fans who'd shared my carriage were made of exactly the same stuff, and in the same terrible circumstances would have performed in just the same way.

My thanks to the HMS Ocean Association for a memorable and thoroughly rewarding experience. I will treasure the inscribed silver salver they gave me – and I hope the people of the current HMS Ocean will treasure them in turn. They deserve it. – Ed.

AFTER 18 MONTHS OF LISTENING IN SUPPORT –

Navy talk line talks back to its customers

EIGHTEEN months after the launch of the Navy's Supportline confidential advice service, the number of callers continues to rise – covering issues ranging through debt, relationship problems, stress, poor health, bullying and general difficulties with Service life.

"We were stepping into the unknown when our team of 12 civilian advisors first manned the 'phones," Supportline manager Mike Ellison admitted.

"We didn't know what sort of issues callers might raise, whether we were equipped to deal with them – and, most importantly, whether we would gain the confidence of Naval personnel and their families.

"Despite comprehensive training in listening skills, equal opportunities and a wide range of briefs on the working conditions and environment of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines – including help from the Samaritans – none of us escaped first shift nerves."

Eighteen months later, most of these unknowns had been answered.

"We are not inundated with calls, but there are more than enough people saying 'I'm glad there was somebody to talk to' and 'Thank you for listening' to make it all worthwhile for the staff."

Many callers are simply seeking information – and Supportline staff do not claim to be expert on pay calculations, interpretation of BR8587 or when HMS Illustrious will next be alongside. But they usually know someone who is – or, at least, where to start trying.

"The great majority of calls are about personal problems and usually start with 'I don't know if I should be calling you...' 'Sorry to bother you...' 'It's nothing really, but...' and so on. To the members of the Supportline team no call is trivial, though – especially when someone has found the courage to call about an issue that is a real problem to them."

"The Supportline is confidential and callers will not be asked to identify themselves in any way. As with any organisation of this sort, some statistical information is collated and it is only this that is passed on to the Navy."

"A very small number of callers have been surprised that Supportline does not take direct action on their behalf and this is something that is always made clear."

"Our role is simply to support by way of listening and, where appropriate, suggesting options for the caller to pursue themselves. The options may lie within the Naval Service (approaching one's Divisional Officer, the specialist support services like NPFS or Sailors and Families Advice Bureaux (SAFAB) or outside ones such as the Citizens Advice Bureau."

"By the end of the call, action will only be taken by the caller, including the choice to take no action at all."

"But when you can actually hear the relief and the return of confidence in a caller's voice you know that you have made a difference and that is a good start."

"The Supportline has a vital and demonstrable role and seeks to improve its service – so if anyone who has made use of it has any com-

ments about it, we will be very happy to hear from them."

□ All approaches to Supportline – including suggestions for improving the service – will be treated in confidence and should be addressed to the Supportline Manager, HMS Nelson. The Supportline itself, on Freephone 0800 09 26282, is open from midday to midnight, seven days a week. Overseas: Call UK +44 1705 726282 and advisers will call you back.

Set in the silver sea



● Silver seas – HM ships Campbeltown and Manchester during Staff College Sea Days, and (right) past and present Commanding Officers of HMS Illustrious, Capt Mark Stanhope and Admiral Sir Jock Slater – her first Captain – on board the carrier.

Pictures: LA(PHOT) Richie Moss.

**Sea King
achieves
10,000
hours aloft**

ONE OF HMS Illustrious' aircraft has clocked up what is thought to be a first in the RN.

Airborne Early Warning (AEW) Sea King XV650, of 849 Naval Air Squadron B Flight, passed 10,000 flying hours during NATO Exercise Northern Light 99.

The helicopter entered service with the Navy in May 1968 as an anti-submarine warfare platform, but con-

verted to AEW work in 1982.

The Sea Kings continue to defy their age, with 849B providing near-continuous AEW cover coupled with anti-surface warfare for more than a week, flying 155 hours and missing just one of 50 serials through unserviceability.

Illustrious also took part in this year's Staff College Sea Days, when members of the Joint Service Command and Staff College from Bracknell visited the ship to see the

Navy go through its paces.

Also on board was Admiral Sir Jock Slater, former First Sea Lord and the first Commanding Officer of the carrier, and a party of Old Illustrians.

Other ships involved were Manchester, Beagle, Grafton, Campbeltown, Middleton and Bridport.

Illustrious later took part in exercises off the UK, and in the Mediterranean, and is due back early this month.



Sister ship, but lots more work

LESSONS learned from work on HMS Illustrious should help speed up a complicated upgrade programme for her sister carrier in Portsmouth Naval Base.

HMS Invincible is swathed in scaffolding, her flight deck dotted with huts and punctured by a gaping hole, as she undergoes a £24 million extended docking period, carried out by Fleet Support Ltd (FSL).

By next summer she should be ready for action again, minus her Sea Dart missile system but with an additional ten per cent more flight deck space forward of the island, and magazine and storage space custom-built to support RAF GR7 Harriers.

Compartment changes include upgraded galleys and new pilot briefing rooms, and there is a major new IT fit, with nine miles of cable – including optic fibre – enhancing three computer systems.

Although Invincible and Illustrious are sisters, there is considerably more work to be done on the former, which has missed planned maintenance slots because of operations over the past 18 months.

Thus there is 40 per cent more structural work to be done in Invincible, and the electrical package is 60 per cent greater, affecting the rest of the project.

FSL have up to 300 workers on board during the day, working alongside around 400 of the carrier's ship's company, who have their own maintenance work and training programmes running in parallel.

While some elements of the work are on a large scale – 7,000 square metres of hull and flight deck have been blasted to be cleaned and repainted or resurfaced, using 14,000 litres of paint – other aspects rely on fine tolerances.

Construction accuracy for new modules and other work is just 3mm, and a 3D model has been used for production engineering.

■ HMS Invincible is staging a charity abseil on October 31 for the Imperial Cancer Research Fund's Breast Cancer Awareness month.

Up to 150 people will perform a freefall abseil of 100ft from the carrier's quarterdeck into the bottom of D Lock with the aim of raising up to £30,000.

■ There was an unusual visitor to Invincible before she entered dry dock – while the ship was de-ammunitioning, the first T8 tandem cockpit training Harrier of 899 Naval Air Squadron was cleared to operate from her flight deck.



● Zero spot, no deck – the enlarged flight deck, replacing the Sea Dart missile system, under construction in HMS Invincible. Picture: CS Photography.

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● **BLACKBIRD** by LA Nathan Dua was one of the studies that won the Peregrine Trophy for the Sea Harrier-equipped 800 Naval Air Squadron.

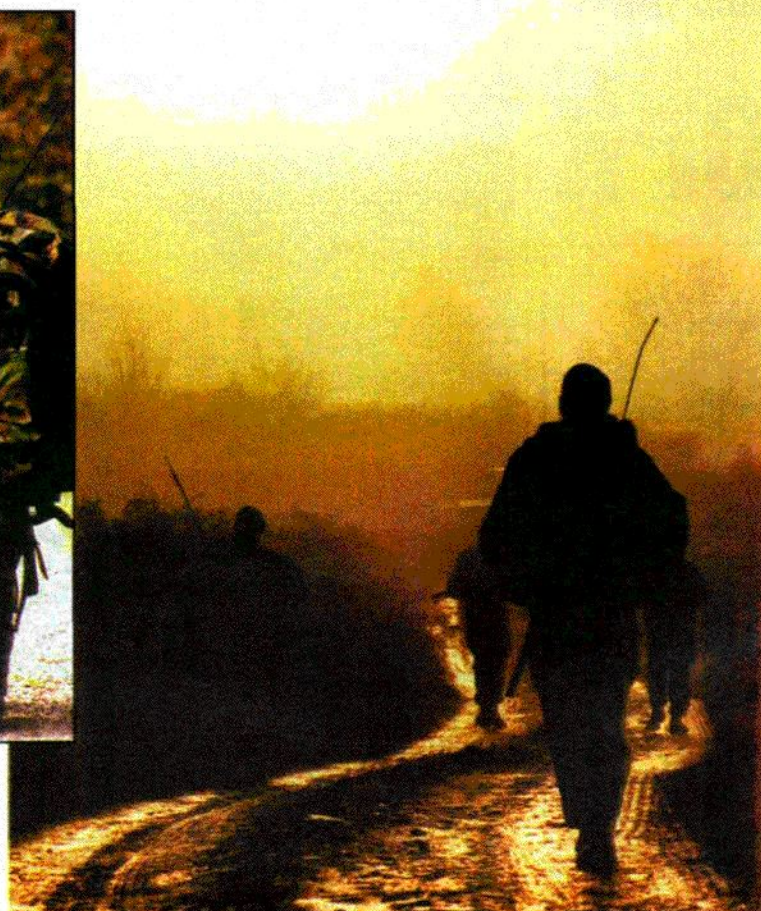
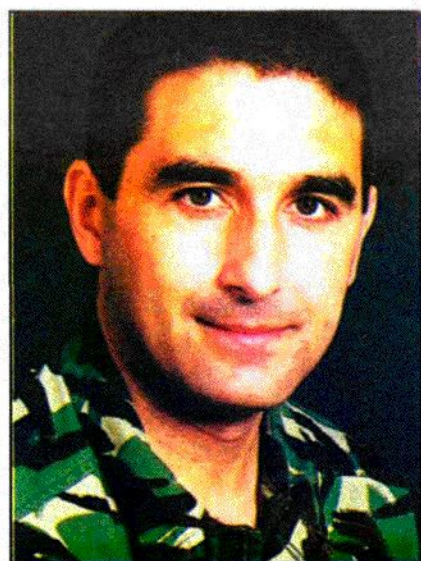
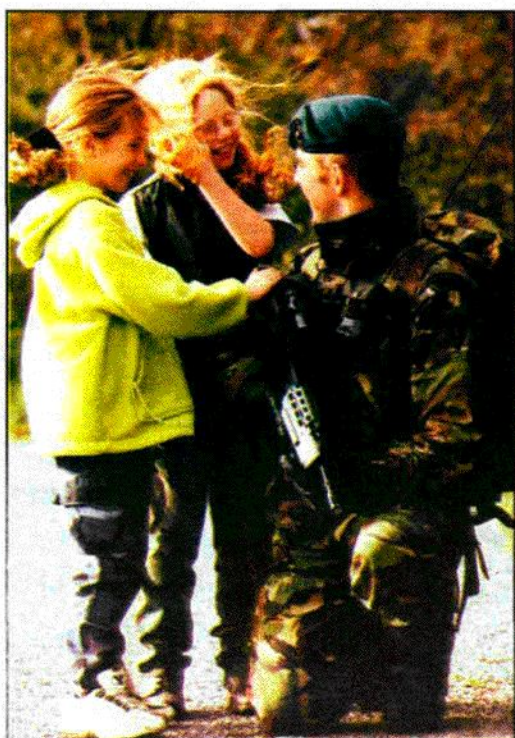
DARK ART

**Brood
take
in Na
comp**

PICTURES take tricks of light to contrast dominating year's Royal Navy photographic competition. The moody shots impress the judges year awarded the BA Trophy – the Service photographic award sponsored by Gretag Imaging – to the 800 Naval Air Squadron. Prominent in the Sea Harrier portfolio was a striking portrait entitled *Blackbird* by



This Irish mist makes Steve a clear winner



WORK SHOT by LA(PHOT) Steve Lewis during his six-month deployment to Northern Ireland as photographer to 42 Commando RM ensured him a double competition success.

Steve (left) won the Peregrine Trophy Agfa Award for producing the best Royal Marines portfolio, including *IRISH MIST* (above) and *BREAKING BARRIERS* (above left).

His success in the competition was foreshadowed weeks earlier when his shots won for him the title of Professional

Photographer of the Year in the Northern Ireland Tri-Service Photographic Competition.

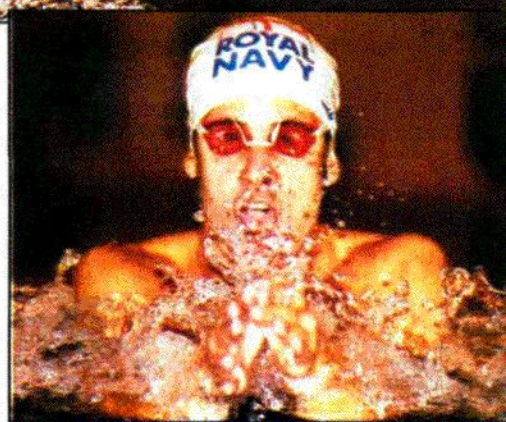
The competition was open to cameramen in the Navy, Army and RAF as well as to dependants, cadets, Ministry of Defence personnel and civil servants attached to the Services in the Province.

It was broken down into nine different categories, and Steve had to enter his work against 300 other images to win the trophy and a cash prize of £250.



● **OUT OF THE SUN** is a study by CPO Stu Antrobus of the Dutch frigate HNLMS Van Galen.

**Taking
a look
on the
lighter
side ...**



● **DUCK TO WATER** by LW Christine Wood (SFPU).

OF THE IMAGE-MAKERS

ding shots honours avy's photo petition

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LA(PHOT) Nathan Dua. He also won second prize, the Fuji Award, as an individual.

The Kodak Award – second prize in the portfolio section – went to the Portsmouth-based Surface Flotilla Photographic Unit (SFPU).

PO(PHOT) Kev Preece of HMS Invincible picked up two prizes – the Nikon Award in the Personnel at Work class and the KJP Award for the best Public Relations entry.

Top individual winner, taking the Hasselblad Award, was LA(PHOT) Rob Harding on the staff of Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland, while third place with the Solent Audio Visual Award went to LA(PHOT) Tam McDonald.

LA(PHOT) Paul Smith of the SFPU won the Maritime Books Award and CPO(PHOT) Stu Antrobus took the Ilford Award. He is on the staff of Director Corporate Communications (Navy) – DCC(N).

Over 250 images were entered in the competition, and prizes were presented in HMS President, London by the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Michael Boyce.

Winners of Marconi Marine prizes, for non-professional photographers: 1, AB W. C. H. Harrison (HMS Northumberland); 2 & 3, NA(METOC) Poole (HMS Invincible).



Wolfie's Navy News award is presented posthumously

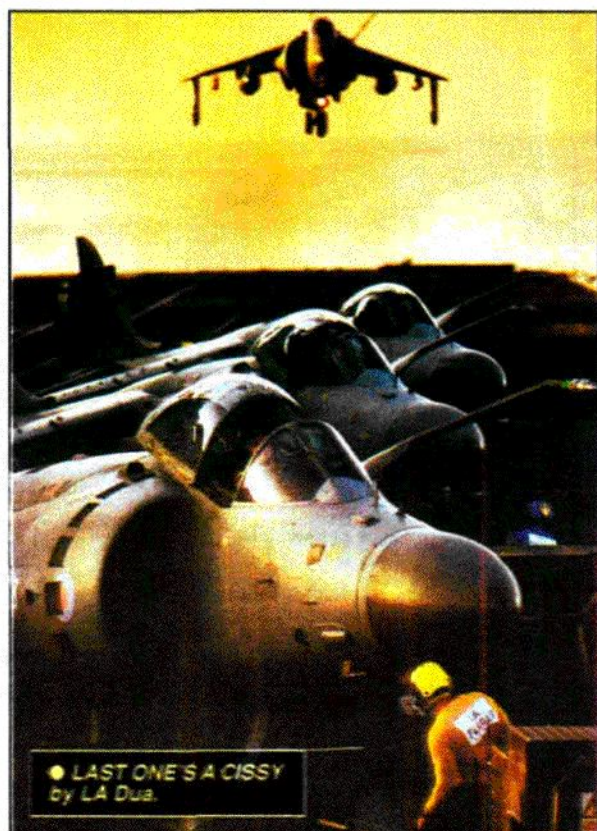
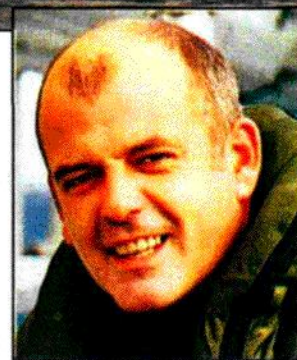
THE NAVY NEWS award for the best photograph to appear in the paper was won by LA(PHOT) Laurence (Wolfie) Wilkinson with this shot taken barely six months before he died on June 6.

With the competition title *EARLY START*, it shows the carrier HMS Invincible, escorted by HMS Newcastle, leaving Portsmouth for their Gulf crisis deployment. On their way home last spring both ships were diverted to take part in

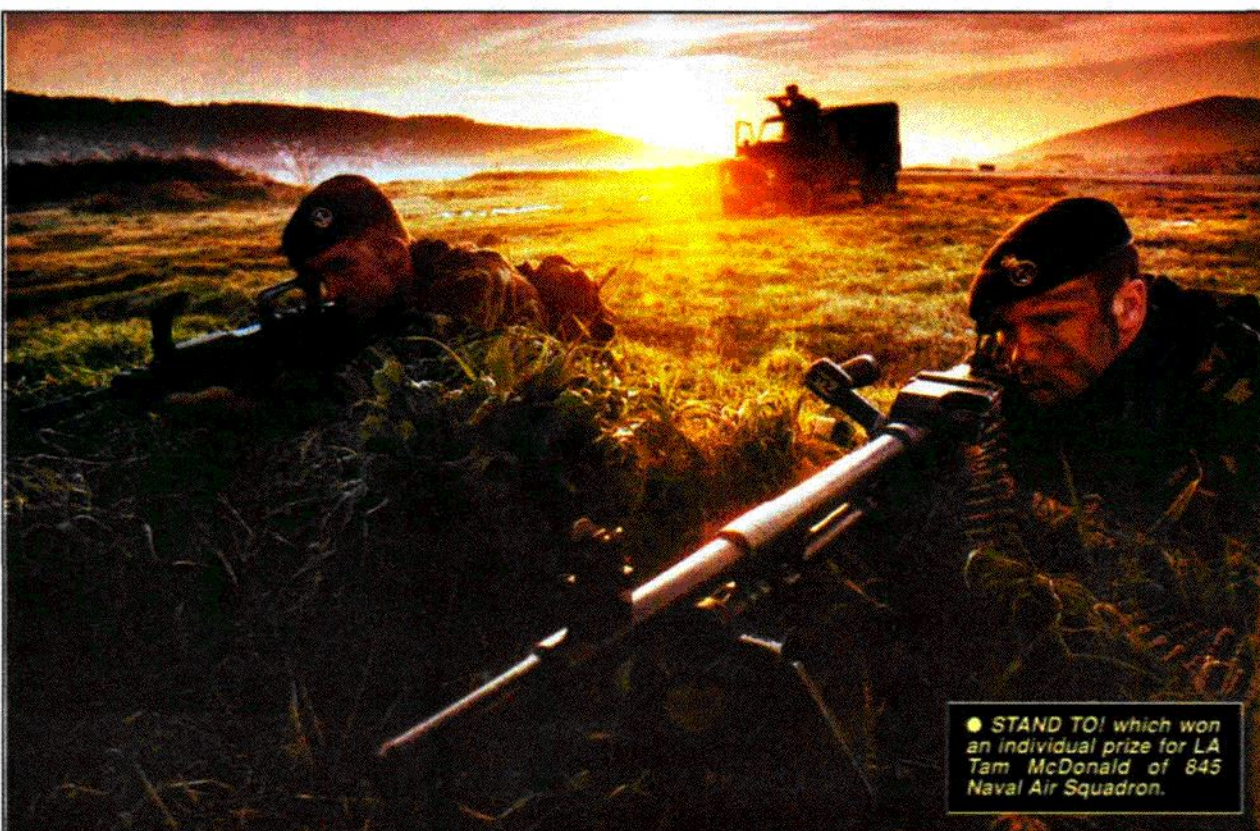
NATO's Kosovo campaign.

Wolfie (right) who died of natural causes at the age of 37, was latterly a member of the Surface Flotilla Photographic Unit. He shot memorable pictures for *Navy News*. The *Invincible* photograph appeared on the front page of our February edition, and his shot of the Montserrat volcano erupting – seen from HMS Liverpool – dominated another of our front pages.

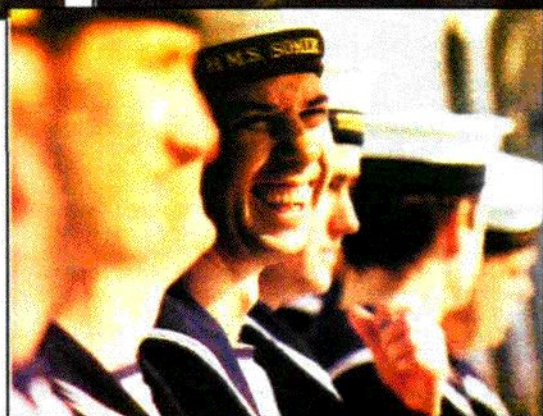
Wolfie's prize was accepted by his widow, Rosie, a steward in the Second Sea Lord's retinue.



● **LAST ONE'S A CISSY**
by LA Dua.



● **STAND TO!** which won an individual prize for LA Tam McDonald of 845 Naval Air Squadron.



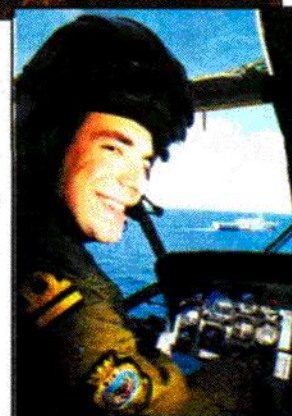
● **LAUGHING BOY**
by LA Paul Smith (SFPU).



● **PARKING PROBLEM**
by PO Kev Preece (HMS Invincible)



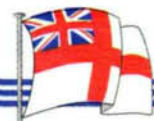
● **SPOT THE BALL**
by LA Dave Hunt (SFPU).



● **FLY NAVY**
by PO Preece



At Your Leisure



LAST RUN

The Last Run, a limited edition print by Plymouth artist Richard Clark to mark the Devonport Field Gunners triumph in the final competition at the Royal Tournament this year, is now on sale at £35 (see this month's Christmas Gifts supplement).

A further 350 copies, signed by the artist, the Devonport Field Gun Officer and First and Second Trainers, are also available at £50 – and one is offered as the prize in our competition (see below).

Profits will go to HMS Drake Welfare Fund.

Royal Oak remembered



● HMS Royal Oak in Portsmouth Harbour, HMS Victory in the background, April 1919

FIVE survivors of HMS Royal Oak, which sank with the loss of 833 officers and men in Scapa Bay on October 13, 1939, met at Portsmouth to sign special limited edition anniversary covers issued by the RN Philatelic Society.

They later travelled to Orkney to lay wreaths over the wreck, at Lyness Cemetery and St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall.

The battleship is one of the UK's major war graves, honoured annually with a remembrance service and by Royal Navy divers hoisting a White Ensign at her stern.

Last year Naval Support Command started an innovative plan to filter off oil leaking from the hull which had caused increasing concern over environmental pollution to the Orkney coast.

For details of the Royal Oak cover write to the RN Philatelic Society, 19 College Road, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth, PO1 3LJ

It could only get better . . .

IF LIFE in the Royal Navy was tough in World War II, it remained so for many years after.

Wardroom indifference combined with Admiralty conservatism and financial shortages to put off any improvement in the ordinary seaman's working conditions, argues David Phillipson in *Roll on the Rodney* (Sutton £16.99).

Using a thematic approach supported with anecdotes, his own personal memories and the first-hand accounts of fellow seamen, he looks at food and clothing, pay, life on the messdecks, shore leave, discipline and relations with officers to give a revealing insight into the world of the Lower Deck in the late 1940s and 1950s.

Hopeless overcrowding, noise and the ever-present threat of tuberculosis and asbestosis were part of this world shared by Royal Navy men only a generation removed from many of those serving today.

It should come as no surprise, therefore, to learn that the Navy was experiencing problems with recruitment and retention, then as now.



Admiral of all he surveys

STANDING on the beach at Old Hunstanton, Norfolk, where his family have lived since the Norman Conquest, Michael le Strange Meakin wears the uniform of an 18th century admiral to denote his role as hereditary Lord High Admiral of the Wash.

He owns all the land from the high tide mark to as far as he can throw a spear!

The land-based admiralty was originally a feudal responsibility established to supervise the security of the Wash.

From Keepers of the Kingdom – the Ancient Offices of Britain, by Alastair Bruce, Julian Calder and Mark Cator (Weidenfeld and Nicolson £25)

An exhibition of photographs of the holders of these offices is currently on show at the National Portrait Gallery until January 2, 2000, and will later move to the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland.

Most of them no longer have any power – exceptions include the First Sea Lord and the Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command – but "exist as largely cost-free historical witnesses living among us and adding to the colour of our national life".

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Win a signed copy of 'THE LAST RUN' featured above

Answer this simple question...

What was the new world record time set this year by the Devonport Field Gun Crew?

Send your answer to – Field Gun Competition, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

Entries to be received by 22nd November 1999. The winner will be notified by 25th November 1999

The judges decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Employees and relatives of Navy News are ineligible.

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At Your Leisure


ScreenScene
— by Bob Baker

Boredom and bickering as zero hour approaches

IN *MCMXIV* the poet Philip Larkin reflects on an old photo of the throng of happy, excited faces queueing outside a recruiting office at the start of the First World War. The gap between what the men were anticipating and what actually lay in wait for them being so wide and catastrophic, Larkin hardly bothers to comment on it, except to record with great tenderness a transitional moment in British history: "... the men leaving the gardens tidy, the thousands of marriages lasting a little while longer: never such innocence again."

Probably it's this extra element of drama – the unpreparedness, the scale of the horror – that gives the First World War such a powerful hold on the imagination.

The story of the Titanic – the great ship speeding complacently through the night towards utter disaster – contains the same set of circumstances in miniature; the war, the wreck – it's impossible to make an uninteresting picture about either of them.

We call it a World War, but at least for the British, 1914-18 is always primarily about the desolate stretch of France that was known as the Western Front. A new movie, *The Trench*, is set in a forward unit just before the Somme offensive of 1916.

The adverts make it sound like a monster pic: "8ft wide, 600 miles long, god-forsaken..." and this isn't altogether inappropriate, since the trenches did indeed "swallow up" more men than any make-believe sci-fi killing machine. The film's big problem is its obvious lack of resources. Clearly there was never enough money in the kitty to attempt anything on a Spielbergian scale, and the action is limited to a few men and a few square yards.

Within its limitations though, the picture vividly captures the boredom, the bickering, the awful tension as zero hour approaches. A platoon of talented actors (Daniel Craig, Danny Dyer, etc) give convincing, nerve-racked performances. The ending is the inevitable one. Anything different would be like having the Titanic arrive safely in New York: the reality was otherwise.

The imagination of Michael Crichton has always ranged freely, from the robot cowboys of *Westworld* to the genetically-engineered dinosaurs of *Jurassic Park* and the medical soap opera of *ER*. Some years back he even wrote a novel based on a tenth century Norse saga, and *The Thirteenth Warrior*, recently released, is the film adaptation thereof.

Any tendency to smile at a movie whose characters have names like Hefldane the Fat and Ragnar the Dour is quickly scotched by the bleakness of the setting: the thick northern forests through which cannibal tribes roam, the cold, the gloom, everybody permanently cross with each other. Antonio Banderas plays the hero, a visiting Saracen, glowering under chain mail through a succession of limb-lopping Viking vs Goth fixtures.

Finally an image straight from

the Slough of Despond – actually it's from a high school picture called *Election*: the teacher hero – Jim the Luckless in Viking terms – sitting miserably in a cheap motel room, dabbing his swollen eye (a bee just stung him) while waiting for the sexy date who, of course, is

never going to show up.

This is one of those comedies where the humour derives from the awful things that befall its main characters. It's quite a superior, sophisticated variation on the old formula.



● Boatyard Beaumaris by Moira Huntley – one of the items on display at the annual exhibition of the Royal Society of Marine Artists at the Mall Galleries, London.

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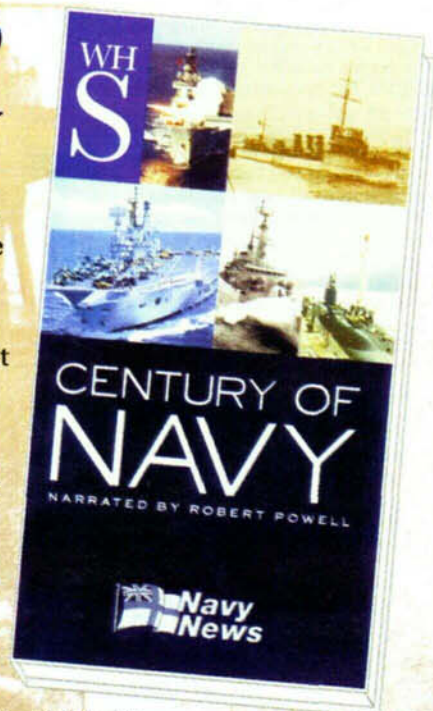
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The GANG PLANK Club

CHAT PAD

Hello to Sophie Jackson who won a Gang Plank prize and had 'the bestest day of her life' at Legoland. We think Chris Short's writing is excellent, except Mum helped a bit!

Hi to Catherine Thackham who wrote a lovely thank you note for her Betty Spaghetti. Glad you liked the sunscreen, Matthew Miller. Imogen Napper, your drawings are very good! Jack Wright wrote to say that he went to the London Dungeon and thought it was great. He'd recommend it to anyone.

You are right, Paul Kitching, although Navy News has been in existence for many years, the Gang Plank Club only started a couple of years ago. We liked your joke, John Davidson. Hope your step dad is better now, Shaun Nobes.

YO HO HO me hearties! I have some Plank splitting exciting news for you. This 'ere Captain Plank has been invited to take his ship to Lapland this Christmas and we'll be setting sail when the cold winds blow hard in December.

I'm told that you landlubbers sometimes write to Santa Claus who lives in Lapland to ask for your Christmas treasure. Well, if you lot would like me to take your letters on board me ship to Lapland you'd better get busy with your pens and paper and send your letters to me right smart.

Oh, and before I forget, you landlubbers take care when you celebrate the end of that bad old pirate Guy Fawkes who tried to blow up Parliament. It wouldn't happen on my ship - I keep the gunpowder under lock and key!!!



Race your Guy to the bonfire!

AS NOVEMBER gets a bit chilly the Gang Plank Club have come up with a game to play indoors.

As you will see, it's all about Guys and bonfires but it will still be fun to play even after Guy Fawkes night.

To play, you will need 12 circles of paper for each person, a dice and a cup to shake it in, some clean sticks, some red tissue paper (or some newspaper) and a Guy.

HOW TO PLAY

First, build your PRETEND bonfire by screwing up the red tissue paper or newspaper at one end of the room, then lay your sticks over it so that it looks like a bonfire.

Next, work out how many circles of paper you can use in your trail up to the Guy. If you have a lot of room at home, or you decide to play outside, then you could use all 12 circles.

Number each circle from one to 12 and then lay them in a line from the bonfire back to the starting line, you can mark this with a stick.

Leave gaps between each circle if you have enough room, and lay a line of circles for each person.

Now you can start. Everyone stands on their line with their Guy. Each person then takes it in turn to roll the dice and you move your Guy along the circles according to the number that comes up.

To make the game longer you can decide that throwing a six means you go back to the start, and the who reaches the bonfire first is the winner!



Have a sparkling bonfire night but follow the fireworks code



1. Always buy fireworks that have the letter and numbers BS7114 on the box as this shows that the fireworks inside meet British Standards.

2. Buy fireworks from a shop that you know

3. Always keep your fireworks in a box and keep it tightly closed unless you actually need to take one out.

4. Always get an adult to light the firework. Make sure that they use a taper and light them at arm's length.

5. YOU MUST follow the instructions on each firework, not all fireworks are set off in the same way.

6. NEVER, NEVER go back to a firework once it has been lit.

7. NEVER put a firework in your pocket and NEVER throw a firework.

8. Wear gloves to hold sparklers, light them one at a time and don't let small children hold them. When you have finished with your sparkler put it in a bucket of water to make sure it doesn't burn anyone or anything.

9. Make sure that all pets are safe and sound indoors. Animals can be very frightened by noisy fireworks.

November birthdays



THESE GANG PLANK Club members all have birthdays in November:

Victoria Jones, Emily Jones, Jeremy Herington, Adam Ross, William Case, Michael Barker, Thomas Milburn, Andrew Pollock, Gloria Spencer, Michael Conray, Alex MacDonald, Gary Bloom, Liam Whittaker, Royston Stray, Martin Baker, Christopher West, Laura Stephenson, William and Matthew Vanns, Oliver and Thomas Hatfield, Thomas Braide, Jack Vardy, Matthew Haines, Kirsty Roberts, Ashley Cole, Kimberley Jeffery, Philip Barnes, James Hockley, Christopher Withall, Jessie Humphries, Victoria King, Gemma Tubby, Kathleen Adams, James Brown, Nadine Manning, Felicity Boobyer, Rhys Williams, Alexander Simpson, Lucy Killick, Anthony McCarthy, Thomas Lockyer, Ben Bayley, Craig Farmer, Aaron Upton, Mari Stewart, Roxanne Cassidy, William Elliott, Stacey Hughes, Jamie Reed, Siobhan Joy, Deeanna Simpson, Dayna Cassell, Andy Gardener, Matthew Sparrow, Perry Lennon, Edward Sibbick, Christine Skippen, Rachel Carney, Shane Bougourd, Katie Vowden, David Williams, Christopher Keeling, Nicola Jones, Sharna Avery, Laura Norman, Sadie Barber, Rebecca Slater, Dominick Shasby, Michael Aspin, Stephen McDonald, Jonathan Rimmer, Ben Haddleton, Ryan Simpson, Daniel Magee, Simon Barley, Nicola Smith, Michael Gibbs, James Stones, Darrell Hadala, Ben Mackey, Beverley Jackson, Christopher Rigby, Christopher Waterman, Martyn Evans, Ryan Newell-Cooper, David Taylor, James Hancock, Charlotte Downey, Stephen Coldwell, James Yates, Samuel Bell, Nigel Weetch, Aaron Steele, Bronson Smith, Danielle Oakley, Dominic Yarwood, Sophie Eastell, Luke Sellens, Allan Rayner, Robert Taylor, Zach Walford, Luke Norris, Jack Samuel, Lisa Maber, Charlotte Cannon, Kathryn Downs, Abbie Blanks, Robert Mayne, Laurence Joy, Joseph Leonard, Callum Shuttleworth, Edward McDonald and Poppy Bell.

GANGPLANK MEMBERS

Win a Family Ticket to...



Starlight Express begins on an evening, when the young controller has been sent to bed. The game he was playing - racing trains around his model layout - has been interrupted. As he falls asleep he dreams he is still controlling his trains. These are no ordinary trains though. They have lives of their own.

The controller decides to race the engines around the track to find the overall champion of trains, and we watch the locomotives team up with partners, all except poor old Rusty, the steam train who nobody wants to race with. As the evening unfolds, we watch as Greaseball the diesel train, Electra, the electric train and Rusty vie for top position in the train world, whizzing around the auditorium at speeds of up to 40 miles per hour, just feet from the audience.

Answer the following questions correctly and you could win a Family Ticket (2 adults and 2 children) to see 'Starlight Express' at the Apollo Victoria Theatre.

Q: Which character **cannot** be seen in Starlight Express?

- (a) Rusty, the steam train (b) Buffy, the buffet car
(c) Thomas, the tank engine

Answers on a postcard with your name, members no. and address to 'The GangPlank Club', Navy News, HMS Nelson, Queen Street, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

Tickets valid Mon-Thurs inc. for 7.45pm performance and Tuesday matinee 3.00pm performance

Closing date for competition - 30th November 1999

The judges decision is final. Employees and relatives of Navy News are ineligible

WELL DONE to all the Gang Plank Club members who planted their sunflower seeds. Emily Chiplin's flowers are twice as big as her and Amie Andrews looks dead cool in front of her flowers which are 11ft 3 inches tall!

Jack Booth showed his sunflowers his Dad's Portsmouth Field Gun shirt to encourage them to grow but the biggest whoppers of them all were grown by Karina Knight.

She took great care of her sunflowers and they have grown to an amazing 15ft 6 inches - WOW!! Well done Karina, Captain Plank will be sending you a special sunny prize.

CAPTAIN PLANK HAS TO FIGHT A DUEL.....

WITH HIS ARCH ENEMY - BLACK JACK! WHO'S A CRACK SHOT?!

BUT THE CAPTAIN HAS A SECRET WEAPON.....



Climb aboard and explore...

www.navynews.co.uk

The German battleship Graf Spee, having suffered heavy damage from Commodore Harwood's cruiser squadron, has escaped under a smoke screen and heads for Montevideo:

BATTLE OF THE RIVER PLATE

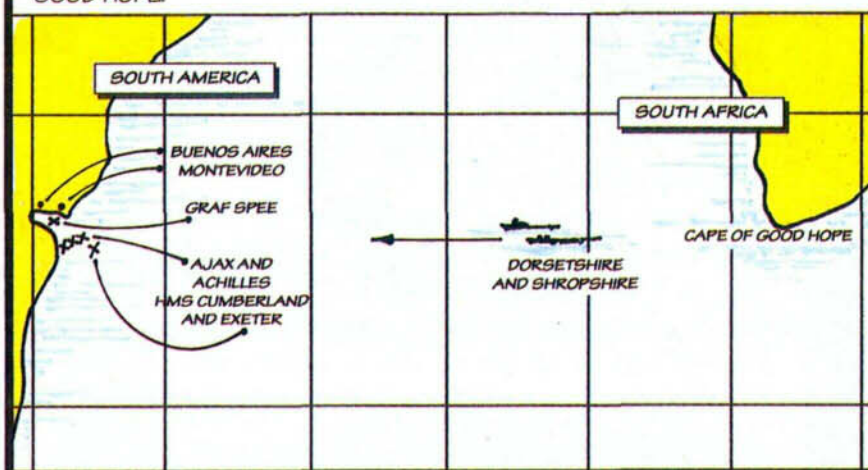
GRAF SPEE HAS 36 MEN KILLED AND 60 WOUNDED, AND SHE IS RUNNING SHORT OF FUEL.



"WE'VE GOT A SUPPLY SHIP, THE TACOMA, AT MONTEVIDEO - WE MUST GET TO HER!"

"THERE MAY BE OTHER ROYAL NAVY SHIPS COMING!"

JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT GRAF SPEE ANCHORS AT MONTEVIDEO. AJAX AND ACHILLES LIE IN WAIT OFF THE ESTUARY OF THE RIVER PLATE WHILE HMS CUMBERLAND ARRIVES TO REPLACE THE BATTERED EXETER. THE CRUISERS DORSETSHIRE AND SHROPSHIRE ARE HEADING WEST FROM THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.



GRAF SPEE IS TRAPPED. HER CAPTIVES ARE TOLD THEY WILL BE SET FREE THE NEXT DAY.



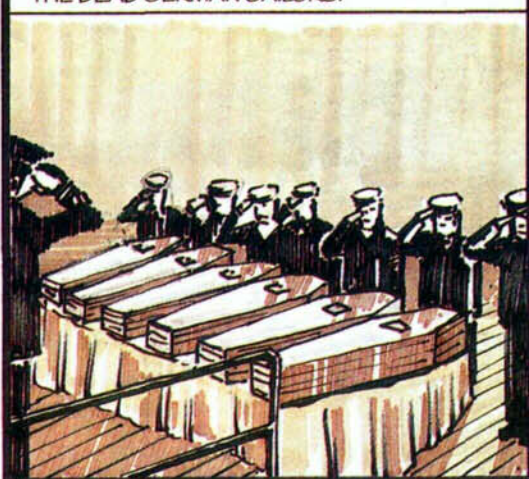
"GENTLEMEN - FOR YOU THE WAR IS OVER!"

ONE OF THEM, CAPT. DOVE, IS TAKEN TO SEE LANGSDORFF - HE HAS BEEN WOUNDED IN THE FACE AND HAS HIS RIGHT ARM IN A SLING.



"WHEN YOU FIGHT BRAVE MEN LIKE THAT, YOU CANNOT FEEL ENMITY, YOU ONLY WANT TO SHAKE HANDS WITH THEM."

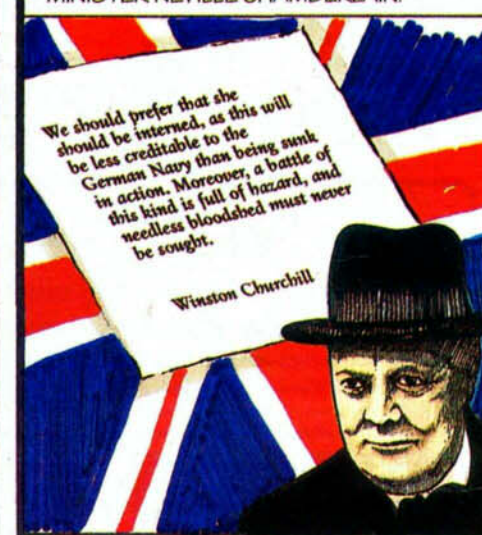
BEFORE LEAVING THE SHIP CAPT. DOVE AND HIS COLLEAGUES GATHER ON THE QUARTER-DECK TO SALUTE THE COFFINS OF THE DEAD GERMAN SAILORS.



MONTEVIDEO IS A NEUTRAL PORT. LANGSDORFF IS TOLD HE MAY ONLY STAY FOR THREE DAYS TO REPAIR HIS SHIP - AFTER THAT SHE WILL BE INTERNED.



WINSTON CHURCHILL WRITES TO PRIME MINISTER NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN:



We should prefer that she should be interned, as this will be less creditable to the German Navy than being sunk in action. Moreover, a battle of this kind is full of hazard, and needless bloodshed must never be sought.

Winston Churchill

● To be continued

1. ILMENULIMN 2. KNAPN LACAIPT 3. OCNTTHCEA

Unscramble these words and you may win a family ticket to the London Boat Show at Earls Court in January. Answers on a postcard with your name, address and membership number to Captain Plank, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Queen Street, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. The first three correct answers out of the Answers Chest get the tickets.

THE CREW all love nothing better than a good movie. There are some great films out on video at the moment - and they really enjoyed watching The King and I and Jack Frost.

Susie thought The King and I was excellent, lots of top songs to sing along to and a really good story.

The film follows Anna Leonowens and her son Louis on their travels to the mysterious land of Siam. Anna has been asked to teach the King of Siam's children but she gets a bit more than she bargained for! She ends up having to teach the King himself a few lessons!

Jack watched Jack Frost. This is a stonking story about a musician who's about to go for the biggest audition of his life but decides that his family are more important to him than the work.

He starts to drive home but is killed on the way. This would be really horrid, but he comes back one year later as a really cool guy! Yes, you've guessed it - as a snowman. Chill out when you're watching this film!

● To win these videos, see the competition on page 28.



Win these great videos!

The Gang Plank Club

Please enroll me as a member of The Gang Plank Club. I enclose a PO/cheque (payable to Navy News) for £3.25

Name

Address

Postcode

D.O.B. Tel No

Joined by: Parent ☐ Grandparent ☐ Other ☐

Do you have any: Brothers ☐ Sisters ☐ Ages ☐

Special Interests: Sport ☐ Music ☐ Film/TV ☐

Friends ☐ Reading ☐

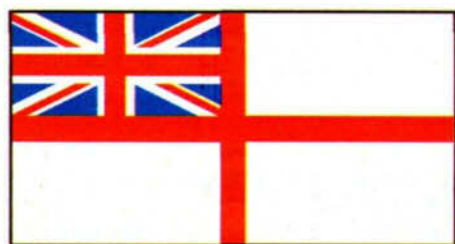
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If you would like any further information before applying, call 01705 733558 or 01705 826040 (24 hr Answerphone)

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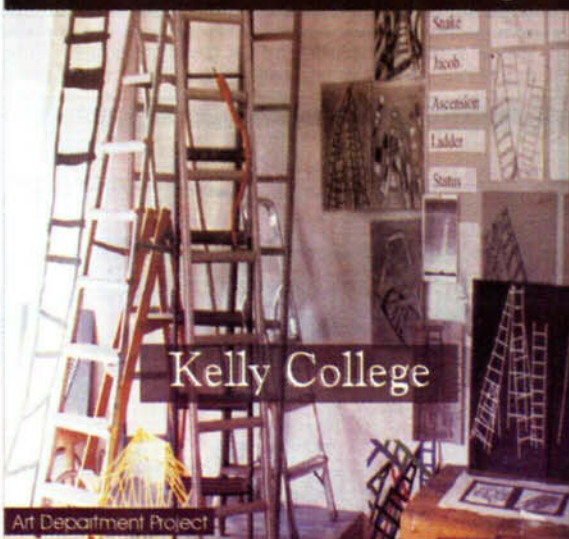
The 'GangPlank Club' is sponsored by The Gosling Foundation



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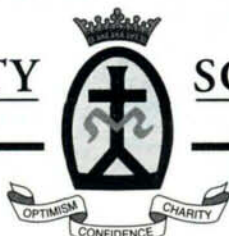


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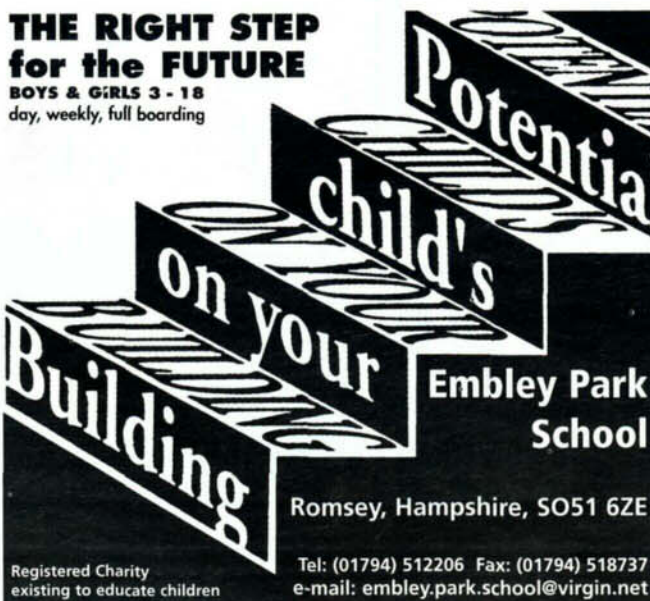
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King and I - from 1st
November
Jack Frost - from 15th
November

READ THE VIDEO REVIEW ON PAGE 27 OF THIS
MONTHS NAVY NEWS GANGPLANK CLUB PAGES...
ANSWER THE TWO QUESTIONS CORRECTLY AND
YOU COULD WIN THESE TWO VIDEOS!

- A** IN WHAT FORM DID JACK FROST APPEAR TO HIS FAMILY?
B WHAT LAND DID ANNA AND HER SON JOURNEY TO?

Answers on a postcard with your name and address to:
The Gangplank Club, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Queen Street,
Portsmouth PO1 3HH

CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES - 30TH NOVEMBER 1999

The Editors decision is final. Employees and relatives of Navy News are ineligible.

London Motor Show Ticket Winners

Mr E. N. Davies of Hants	Mrs J. Savory of Beds
Mr V. McDonagh of Sheffield	Mr Samuel of Manchester
Mr Roger Blain of Cheshire	Mr Donald Cremer of Surrey
Ms Ann McCaffrey of Devon	Mr O.J. Webb of Warwickshire
Mr Hugh Walter of Berks	Mr Mike Napper of Clevedon

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Please apply in writing enclosing CV to Guy Whittaker, Senior Personnel Officer, FLS Aerospace Limited, Long Border Road, London - Stansted Airport, Essex CM24 1RE

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All applicants will be reviewed and only those considered suitable will be contacted.



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Reservists train at one of 13 Reserve Training Centres across UK and worldwide throughout the Fleet. The commitment is 2 weeks continuous training a year plus an evening most weeks and the occasional weekend.

Uniform is free and naval pay and travelling expenses are payable; in addition, most reservists qualify for an annual tax-free bonus (Bounty) - currently up to **£1,050 pa.**

Recruits are normally British or Commonwealth subjects, aged between 16 and 33 years (43 for ex-RN), male or female and physically fit.

For further information, contact your nearest Reserve Training Centre or Armed Forces Careers Office.

For details of these 'phone 0345 300123 (24hrs) or 01705 727676.

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Please quote reference HSNM.



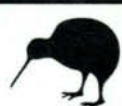
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Applications to join the Royal New Zealand Navy as an Education Officer are now being invited. Successful applicants will preferably be Lieutenants, with tertiary and teaching qualifications together with secondary/polytechnic experience. Vacancies exist for those qualified and experienced in teaching a combination of English, Mathematics, Mechanics, Engineering, Electrotechnology, Electronics and Mechanical/Electrical Drawing. The teaching level is equivalent to Higher National Certificate/Diploma. Interest and experience in curriculum development and/or assessment procedures is essential.

Successful candidates will work at HMNZS TAMAKI, the training establishment of the Royal New Zealand Navy, in Devonport, Auckland. There may be opportunities later to move into other fields in the Navy, such as training development, quality control and administration. HMNZS TAMAKI is a registered Government Training Establishment.

For further information and a job application form, send your Curriculum Vitae to:

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● Regal pose – a model of the statue of King George VI which will go on display at BRNC, Dartmouth.

Destroyer calls on Irish capital

DESTROYER HMS York has paid a four-day visit to Dublin, in a well-earned break from a series of trials.

The Type 42 had just completed her Fleet Date Acceptance inspection, and the visit came between trials and shakedown.

While alongside, the destroyer hosted a lunch party for the British ambassador and six Commonwealth heads of mission, as well as an official reception for 80 guests

including the Commander-in-Chief of the Irish Navy and the German and Swedish ambassadors.

HMS York's rugby and football teams were both narrowly beaten by the Gardai.

The ship also hosted visits by a small group of schoolchildren, and a party of World War II veterans.

As *Navy News* went to press, York was undertaking basic operational sea training in Devonport, testing the enhanced systems which make her one of the most capable anti-air warfare platforms in the Fleet.

She will return to Portsmouth next month to resume her duties.

Statue links past and future of Navy

WORDS spoken by royalty before the Second World War have been chosen to speak to the Naval officers of the next millennium.

Long before his accession, King George VI delivered the speech to a group of up and coming managers of industry, telling them:

'Nobody can lead unless he has the gift of vision and the desire in his soul to strive to leave things in the world a little better than he found them. He will strive for something which may appear unattainable, but which he believes in his heart can one day be reached, if not by him, by his successors, if he can help to pave the way.'

The speech will be engraved on the plinth of a statue of the King, depicted in day uniform with his admiral's cap under his arm, which recalls fallen young Royal Navy officers, and a visit by the King to the college just weeks before the outbreak of war.

July saw a diamond jubilee memorial service held in the college chapel, followed by a reunion of the cadets of 1939, when the 'King George VI Millennium memorial sculpture' was commissioned.

It is intended the statue will become a permanent link between the 'old Navy' of the past century and the Royal Navy of the future

Dockyard model on display

A SCALE model of Sheerness Dockyard is set to go on public display for what is believed to be the first time in over 40 years.

The 1:60 scale model was built to aid construction of Sir John Rennie's dockyard, formally opened in 1823 at a cost of £2.5 million.

The model was stored for many years in the docks before being restored by English Heritage.

It is now stored at Fort Brockhurst in Portsmouth, where it was inspected by members of a group, comprising English Heritage, the Sheerness Society, Sheppey Local History Society, the Sheppey Heritage Trust, Kent County Council, Swale Borough Council and Sheerness Town Centre Manager.

They will decide which elements to put on display, as it is not possible to display the complete model, which requires an area of at least 1,600 sq ft.

The exhibition will run from December 4-30 in Sheerness Library Gallery in Russell Street, Sheerness. Admission is free.

Other contemporary exhibits are sought, including the Dockyard Bell, which is believed to have survived and is still on the Isle of Sheppey. Contact Alan Ogilvie, Town Centre Manager, on Sheerness 580895.

Nelson Society looks to youth

THE NELSON Society has launched a young members group to attract the under-16s.

The Top Sail Group was officially inaugurated on Trafalgar Day by Anna Tribe, a descendant of Nelson and Lady Emma Hamilton, at the Admiral Lord Nelson School in Portsmouth.

The school maintains close links with the city's Historic Dockyard through ex-CPO Peter Green, liaison officer for HMS Victory and the school.

For details of the group, contact Peter Green on 023 9266 1175, or e-mail panda.green@virgin.net

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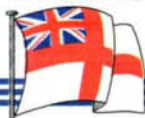
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Credit brokers may provide the answer

THE MODERN day credit and finance arena can be a potential minefield for today's consumer.

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Loans were easier when the choice was more limited, for today's market offers a vast range of seemingly identical loans.

With so much choice, it is not just

confusing - are you making the right decision or an expensive mistake?

You may want to buy a new car. Do you use a credit card, or take the finance offered by the dealer?

Or would your bank be a better bet - or one of those firms which put a leaflet through your door?

One solution is to look to a credit brokerage, which works in a similar way to an insurance broker.

By using their knowledge and experience, your broker will be able to find a loan that suits your particular requirements.

In most cases, the services of a financial broker are free, as the bank, building society or finance company reimburses the broker for the introduction to the customer.

A typical credit brokerage's portfolio might include secured loans, remortgages and unsecured loans, offering borrowing between £500 and £250,000.

Even if a client has had problems with paying credit in the past, such as County Court judgments or mortgage arrears, a number of credit brokerages, such as Midland & General Direct, do not simply close the door on them, but listen and negotiate a secured loan or mortgage with one of the many lending companies they deal with.

The products of the credit broker differ considerably regarding their individual benefits.

The unsecured loan is fairly quick to arrange, but tends to be more expensive, usually over three to seven years maximum, and can be limited to a ceiling of £15,000.

A secured loan is more versatile, allowing the customer to choose a higher level of borrowing generally at much lower interest rates, and is

dependent upon equity in the property and their ability to repay.

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Steve Walker, the General Manager at Midland & General, says it's a matter of persistence.

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This information was supplied by Midland & General Direct.



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Agencies help share vital information

INFORMATION on consumers can be gathered from a variety of sources, both public and restricted.

These include the electoral roll, County Court judgments and Scottish Decrees, bankruptcies and Administration Orders, and lending companies' own records.

The UK's major lending companies have agreed to share with each other details of their customers' credit agreements.

This allows them to check, when someone applies for credit, that they have repaid other lenders in the recent past, or is repaying current credit commitments.

Credit reference agencies (CRAs) such as Experian - one of only two in the UK to hold personal data - make it possible for lenders quickly to make accurate and responsible lending decisions.

They also have a role to play in the fight against credit fraud - if someone moves away without leaving details of a new address, the trail may be picked up again through this shared knowledge.

Thus an organisation like Experian will hold - but not own - the records of a number of lenders, and acts as a go-between in the sharing of that information.

The information held by such credit reference agencies is simply a copy of that held by all the different lenders, updated regularly.

Such information can be accessed only if a lender is prepared to make its own data available for sharing, and it can only be used for strictly-defined purposes.

When a search is made, a 'foot-

print' is kept, so that people can see which companies have sought information about them.

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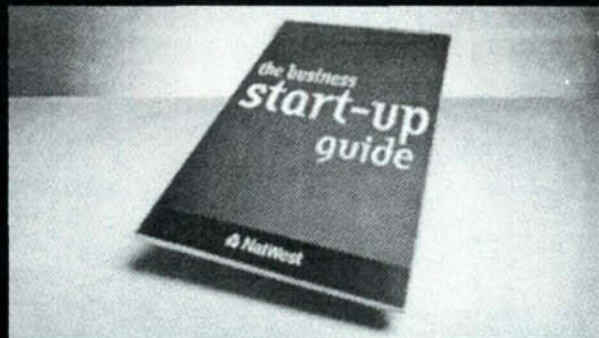
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£1,000	Monthly £97.80 Total £1,173.60	£39.63 £1,426.68	£24.50 £2,058.00	14.9%

Without Repayment Protection. For guide purposes only. Actual payments may differ by a few pence.

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Drafty... The Royal Marines



Advice is helping Marines to choose their own path

THE POST of Royal Marines Career Manager was established in May to provide independent career advice for all Marines and Corporals to help them plan their future and their careers.

And an added incentive was that this should also drive down the Notice rate and increase the morale of individuals.

Although the RM has over twenty specialist branch advisors it was deemed appropriate to target those men without a Specialist Qualification (SQ) and give them some guidance about how they should plan their careers and how to go about fulfilling their goals.

And the process starts early in the career of all Marines. During the latter stages of training, recruits are briefed about specialist training in general and the Direct Specialisation Scheme (DSS) Branches in detail.

They also have a personal interview with the Career Manager to discuss what they want to achieve during their career in the Corps and are provided with advice about how they should go about achieving their goals and a Career Advice Guide will soon be issued to all recruits who complete training at CTCRM.

Contrary to popular belief the DSS scheme works well. Although deemed to be unpopular by those selected, less than 5 per cent of those men drafted to special qualification training elect to relinquish their SQ at the two-year point.

During their first appointment in a RM unit these Marines are then contacted about

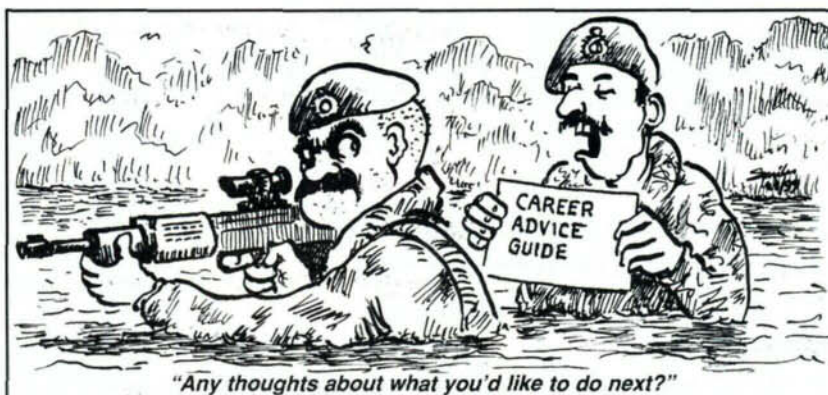
the options which are available to them. They can elect to undergo specialist training in a branch of their choice or continue to serve as a General Duties (GD) rifleman. The process is repeated at the two-year point when a Marine is likely to be nearing the completion of his first draft. The information provided at these stages is also used for market research and to identify trends.

The greatest number of enquiries to date has been from Marines and junior non-commissioned officers (JNCOs) who have realised they may have missed the opportunity of promotion and progression due to failing to take up a specialist trade.

Over half of Marines in the Corps have a SQ and this level reaches over eighty percent at Corporal level and above. Clearly there is a need to readily make available the relevant advice and information.

It is not just the men themselves that require education but also the chain of command. All NCOs and Officers need to be aware of the needs and aspirations of their men so that they can also provide useful and accurate advice and information.

As a result of this all men attending Junior and Senior Command Courses receive instruction regarding career issues and will be provided with a Career Advice Guide.



A number of initiatives and tools will greatly assist in the career management of the Corps: the RM Courses Helpline, the Promotion Prospect Assessment (PPA), the Career Advice Guide, accurate and timely completion of the C233, understanding a draft order, and a better understanding of career management by the chain of command, essential if we are to give these men an opportunity to realise their full potential.

All Marines must take a greater interest in their career and have a plan of action of how to achieve their goals. To hide in a unit and hope that you don't get drafted to a non preference area is not the way to plan a career.

Remember, trained recruits should go to a Commando unit for their first tour and

that alone will generate a drafting cycle you may be caught in.

The Career Manager writes to individuals who have submitted their Notice for Discharge and to those who seek career advice. If you receive such a letter read it carefully. It may help towards putting you on the right path to realising your ambitions.

If you are considering submitting your Notice for Discharge, contacting the Career Manager before doing so could save having to withdraw it at a later stage.

The RM Career Manager is available to provide advice and information to an individual or the chain of command and can be contacted at HORM (Tel 01705 547532 or military (93832) Ext 7532).

Situations vacant

THE NAVAL DRAFTING Directorate is seeking volunteers for the following:

LAEM attached to HMS Excellent. A shore billet for a leadership trainer, based in South Wales. Required as soon as possible for six months.

LAEM(R) for HMS Sultan. A shore billet at Gosport, initial course instructor, required from February for two years.

LAEM(R) for HMS Sultan. A shore billet at Gosport, initial course instructor, required from March for two years.

LAEM(R) for HMS Sultan. A shore billet at Gosport, accommodation leading rate, required March for six months.

LAEM(M) to exchange with the Army. A shore billet at Wattisham in Suffolk, 2nd line repair workshop, required as soon as possible for two years.

LMEM(M) for HMS Nottingham. A sea-going billet based at Portsmouth. Required from May for 30 months.

Any branch acting or leading rate (or AB passed WPE seamanship) for transfer to seaman specialisation. BR 1066 Art 1006 refers. Required as soon as possible.

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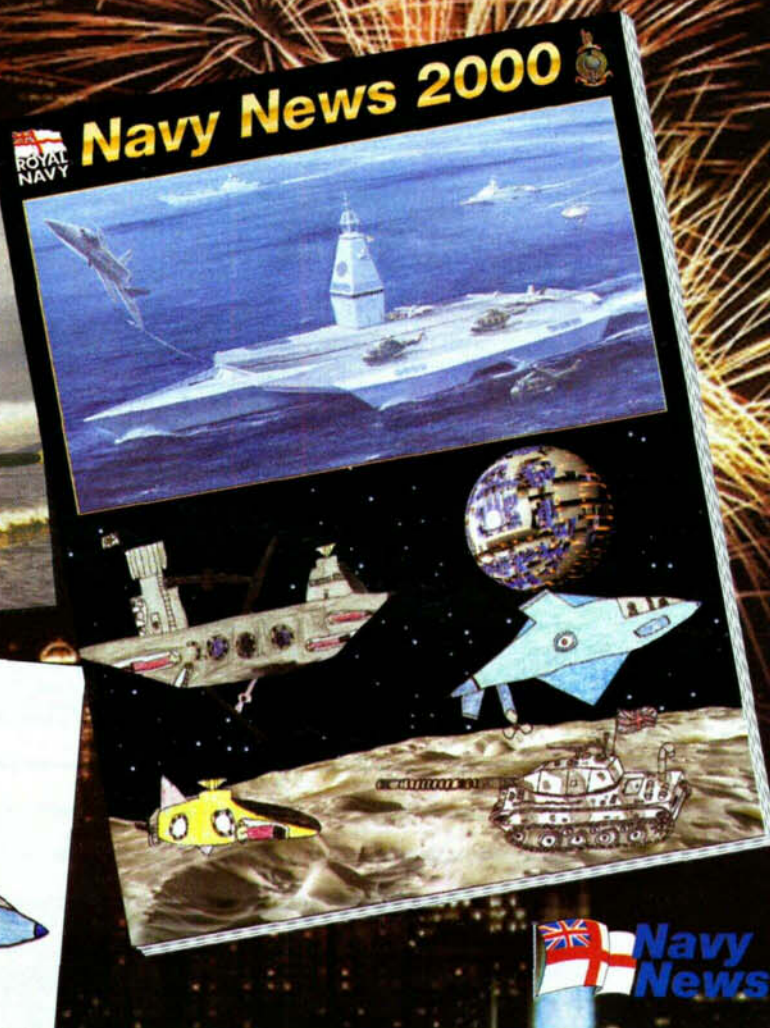
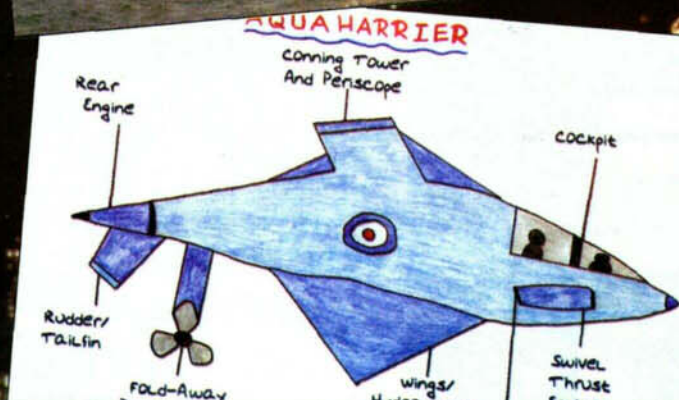
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Family Matters



● **HOUSE ON THE HILL:** Commodore Smith of HMS Nelson with (l to r) Elizabeth Hesling of West Drayton Naval Wives, Julie Lawley of Peacocks Pre-School, Community Worker Taff Jones and Project Co-ordinator Helen Harris. Picture: LA(PHOT) Paul O'Shaughnessy

New community centre opens its doors in Drayton

FORCES families living in Drayton have a new community centre after the Defence Housing Executive donated a property to serve the 140 Service households in the suburb of Portsmouth.

Known as 'The House On The Hill' the former service quarter in Birkdale Avenue has a pre-school creche on the ground floor which can accommodate 15 youngsters and the upstairs has a small kitchen, a meeting room and a play area for children.

Soft-block play equipment was bought with the aid of a grant from the Scarman Trust of the Millennium Commission and the cash was also used to provide an outside ramp to give access to wheelchair users.

Funds were further bolstered by the efforts of the wives club, and Navy wives decorated and furnished the upstairs rooms

while husbands built a buggy park at the side of the house.

The project to relocate the community house took two years to plan and complete with the bulk of the conversion to two separate facilities being funded by HMS Nelson and the establishment's Commodore David McG Smith was invited to open the new building.

Free call time is doubled

FREE TELEPHONE call time given to all operationally deployed personnel is to be doubled from ten to twenty minutes per week after a huge cash injection of £5 million was announced by George Robertson.

The outgoing Defence Secretary said that the Government was putting extra cash into the Welfare Telephone Allowance Fund to make it easier for families to keep in touch.

More than 13,000 personnel, who are deployed world-wide as far away as East Timor, the Gulf, Kosovo and Bosnia, will benefit from the move.

Announcing the initiative, he said: "Forces families play a crucial role in supporting our people and I want

to make it easier for them to keep in touch.

"A phone call is not the same as being there but those in the front line will tell you that it can make a big difference."

The allowance will be issued in pre-paid phone cards for the cost of a 20-minute UK call each week.

A particular bonus for sailors deployed at sea is the chance to accumulate their entitlement and use their full allowance when their ships berths.

Portugal's a hive of activity

CASH from the Sailor's and Fleet Amenities funds and some superb team work between the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force helped to establish a brand new Hive for families at CINCSOUTHLANT (formerly CINCIBERLANT) near Lisbon in Portugal.



● **CELEBRATION:** Admiral Rodrigues, Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic, at the official opening of the new Hive.

Although there are 60 RN and RAF personnel serving there, they are lodgers units on the NATO and Portuguese military site and no spare accommodation could be found for a Hive where people could drop in for a friendly chat.

But staff eventually located two surplus Portakabins at RAF Laarbruch and the RAF Welfare Fund put up some of the money for their transportation.

Then the Sailor's and Fleet Amenities fund made grant which was generous enough to pay for the remaining transport costs and for their complete refurbishment.

Portuguese company Setronix provided the wiring for telephones and internet connection and after a lot of hard work by UK wives the new hive was officially opened by the Portuguese Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic, Admiral Reis Rodrigues.

IN BRIEF

Railcards available to widows and children

FORCES Railcards are now available to war widows and their dependants.

The move follows agreement in discussions between the Association of Train Operating Companies, the Royal British Legion, the War Widows Association of Great Britain and representatives of the Ministry of Defence.

Railcards issued to family members of a deceased Service person will remain valid until the expiry date of the card – a maximum of 12 months. After that, an HM Forces Railcard can be obtained by war widows or widowers under the age of 60 and their dependants through the RBL at a cost of £2.50. Claimants should be receiving a Forces Family Pension.

Further details can be obtained from: Pensions Department/Railcards, The Royal British Legion, 48 Pall Mall, London SW1 5JY (0171 973 7235).

Hearing aids for war pensioners

WAR PENSIONERS should think twice before buying expensive private hearing aids which are often no better than those available free from the National Health Service.

The NHS has a duty to provide clinically suitable hearing aids and pensioners who have difficulty with their devices should seek an appointment with their GP.

Manchester makes it a family affair



● **HUG:** OM Kev Davie and Olivia enjoy their day at sea

Relatives enjoy day out with destroyer

A FAMILY fun day held on board the Destroyer HMS Manchester was a big hit with the crowd of relatives who embarked in the ship at Portsmouth.

Once they were safely on board, Manchester put to sea and spent the day sailing in the Solent in glorious weather.

The fun day was held just before HMS Manchester, destroyer escort to HMS Illustrious, sailed for Exercise Northern Lights off the coasts of Scotland and France.

Manchester's family day included a visit by the ship's flight, a Lynx of 815 Naval Air Squadron, and a fly past from a Tornado GR1 based at Boscombe Down, and on board, Sea Dart loading drills, a full power trial of the ship's engines and sea boat deployments helped to keep the spectators entertained.



● **CHEERS!** Hands up who wants to join the Navy when they grow up then? Pictures by SFPU



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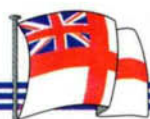
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Scenic scores with stowage space to spare

IN THE era of people movers, pace-setter Renault found a sure-fire hit when it created the Scenic, a "mult-activity car" that took up the same roadspace as the Megane hatchback on which it was based, writes Glynn Williams.

Two years on, there is New Scenic – now divorced from the Megane branding – and if the first was excellent the second is brilliant, and very good value.

For while the car has had substantial improvements and raised specifications, prices across the range have been reduced, starting from £13,100 with the flagship at just over £18,000.

There aren't many family motorists who can justify a seven-seater, hence the success of the airy and adaptable five-seater Scenic.

It handles as well as any family hatchback, yet has the raised seating position for more relaxed motoring which has made the bigger wagons, and 4X4s in particular, so popular.

And it has pace – a new range-topping 2-litre 16-valve engine with variable valve timing produces

140bhp and 200Nm of torque for 0-60mph in under ten seconds and 122mph top speed, enough to see off a 2-litre Golf GTi!

This month's test car had the same muscle in terms of torque – what you need for effortless overtaking – but a more modest 100bhp, and that was from the 1.9-litre turbo diesel.

It also had Sport badging, which might seem a little ostentatious for a diesel, but while that refers more to the trim, the performance was lusty with 0-60 in under 13 seconds and 108mph potential, with excellent pulling power in between.

The new models are visually distinguished by a steeper bonnet rake with honeycomb grilles and distinctive double optic headlights, but under the skin there is a lot more.

Standard features include height-adjustable driver's seat, driver, front passenger and front lateral airbags and load limiters on

both the front and outer rear seatbelts.

All models have anti-lock disc braking on all hubs with electronic brake balance, to stop the car in 45 metres from 62mph.

Security features include powerful remote locking and a system which automatically locks all doors including the tailgate when you exceed 6mph, to safeguard against personal attack and bag snatches.

All models also have power steering, electric front windows and door mirrors, height-adjustable steering wheel, and height-adjustable rear parcel shelf which can take a 70kg load.

Apart from distinctive alloy wheels and front foglamps, the Sport specification included electric operation for the two tilt-and-slide sunroofs, sliding outer rear



● **NO COMPROMISE:** The new Renault Scenic 2.0 16V

seats, plus an accessory power point below the middle one, a single CD player in the 60w hi-fi, and outside temperature readout.

To keep cool inside there is also manual air conditioning with pollen filter which also serves a very handy cool box located in front of the gear lever – a practical stowage area which can take three cans of drink, or keep chocolate or sandwiches fresh.

Neat stowage is where the Scenic scores time and again. Apart from door pockets which will take a litre of milk, there are lidded glove pockets above and below the passenger side of the dash, storage boxes under both

front seats, and very neat concealed boxes under the floor in the rear passenger footwell – ideal for concealing laptop or camera.

Nowhere is there a hint of compromise – legroom is good, front and rear, and visibility is excellent all round with rear headrests retracting into the seats, all of which are supportive and comfortable.

And this smooth and quiet diesel which pre-heats for start-up before you can plug in the seatbelt is a lusty mover which averages nearly 50mpg.

What more can you ask for?

CAR FACTS

MODEL: Renault New Scenic 1.9Ti Sport
PRICE ON ROAD: £15,700 (model range £13,100-£18,300)
ENGINE: 1.9-litre turbo diesel producing 100bhp and 200Nm torque at 2,000rpm
TRANSMISSION: Five-speed manual change
PERFORMANCE: 0-62mph – 12.7 secs; top speed – 108mph
ECONOMY: 47.9mpg combined cycles (57.6mpg extra urban)
INSURANCE: Group 6E

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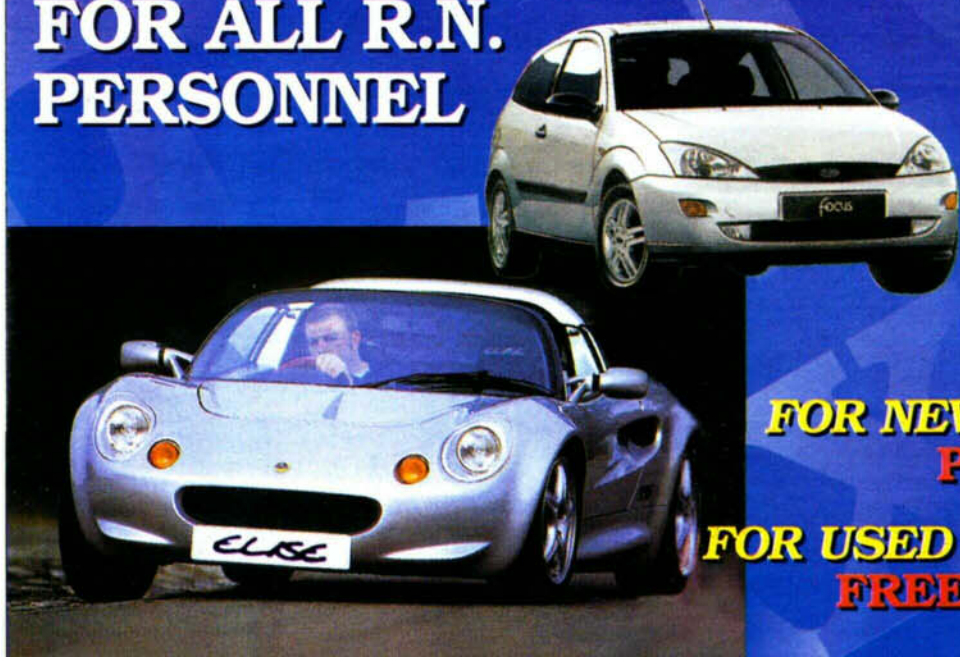


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Motoring

It's a buyer's market now

NOW is a good time to change your car, whether for a new or secondhand one, according to the market experts.

In the new car market, *Glass's Guide* – "bible" to the motor trade – says that September's first V-registrations fell well short of expectations, which has created a remarkably strong buyer's market.

This is because manufacturers will want to sell the cars ready for an expected avalanche of orders for the start of the new millennium.

Paul Jarvis, *Glass's* director of valuation products, says that as well as manufacturers wanting to avoid being left with a tranche of unsold cars, there are some extraordinarily good deals including free insurance, finance and servicing offers.

"When these incentives are combined with excellent part exchange offers resulting from the current strong demand for well-

maintained used cars, anyone seeking to buy a new car between now and the end of the year can expect to make considerable savings," he says.

One reason for the used demand is the forthcoming demise of four-star petrol, making older cars even more of a liability.

Doubtless one reason for the drop in demand – apart from the attraction of holding on for a model first registered in the 21st century – is speculation that the car makers will be forced to cut their prices.

But Ford for one has guaranteed that if prices are cut it will refund the difference to those buying now.

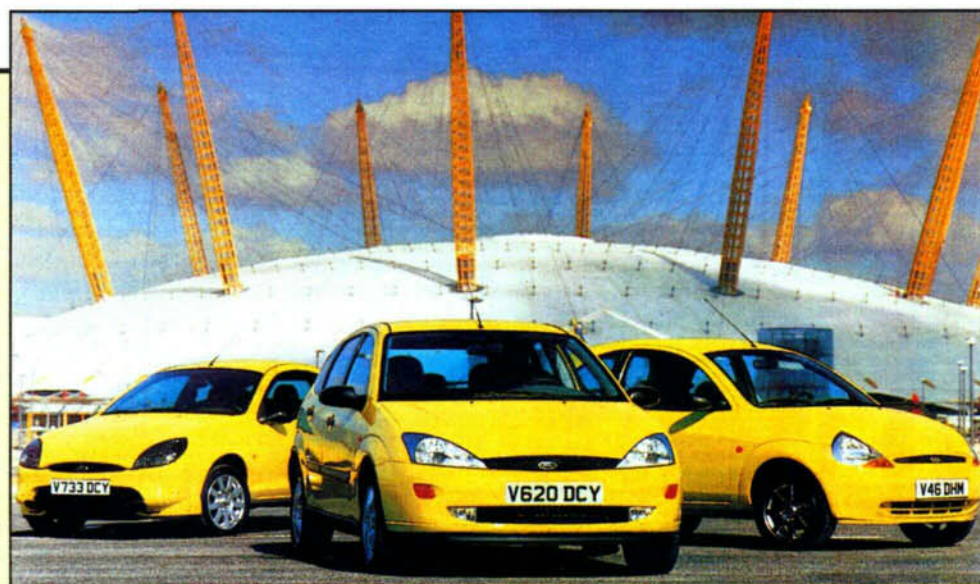
For those buying secondhand, there is new reassurance available from the HPI Check designed to provide the buyer with greater depth of information to reduce the risks of fraud.

New data from the DVLA adds

to details of whether the car has been reported stolen, subject to outstanding finance, or been involved in a major insurance claim suggesting substantial accident damage.

The new information includes the year of manufacture – there have been times when new cars have sat in an airfield for a year before first registration – whether the car was first registered abroad (which could indicate a "grey import"); whether it has been registered as scrapped; the number of previous keepers; date of last keeper change; and colour changes with date which could indicate accident damage cover-up.

The HPI Check is available to used car buyers by calling 01722 422422 for a fee of £31 including VAT, and can also include the market value of the vehicle being checked if the information is available.



FORD celebrates its recently awarded status of Design Council Millennium Product for its Ka, Puma and Focus models by introducing special editions unveiled at last month's Motor Show – in any colour you like so long as it's Millennium Yellow.

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● TOYOTA's new MR2 Roadster, a head-turner at the London Motor Show, is an open-top two-seater now offered with a specially designed hard top for winter use, giving it the practicality and look of a coupe. It will go on sale early next year.



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Calling Old Shipmates

HMS Sheba – Aden, Associated Ships and Escort Vessels WW2: Looking for others to join six for London reunion, June 15-17. Gordon Pinfield, 7, Fairways, Medomsley Rd, Consett DH8 5NT, tel: 01207 503617.

Loch Class Frigates Association: Seeking Hayward, Palmer, Snowden, Hollis, Barnett, Wakeman, Palmer and others, or other Loch vessels, to join association and April reunion. Edward Freathy, Elmbank, Marlow Rd, Bourne End, Bucks SL8 5NL, tel: 01628 523711.

Weapon Mechanicians: 381 passed through HMS Caledonia/Vernon/Excellent to be Weapon Mechanicians. Where are you? Details of association and reunion for Charlie Davis, 1 Hillview, Uploders, Bridport DT6 4PF, tel: 01308 485365.

HMS Unicorn Association: – almost 300 members – still seeking Jock Allen (1943-6); Taffy Ward, Stan Larsen, Len Cornish, Albert Bickherdide, Lew Wilcock (1943-6). Contact E Bosworthick, 3, Arundel Close, Hemel Hempstead HP2 4QR, tel: 01442 255821.

HMS Quilliam: Roy Johnson is looking for old shipmates 1943-45. Attack on Sabang: any info, photos etc. appreciated and help in research of the Quilliam Flotilla Leader. Tel: 01782 817561 or 01782 281906.

HMS St George, Isle of Man, 1941/42, Class 264W: Any of you like to correspond or reminisce? Contact Len (Lofty) Warren, ex-Telegraphist, on 01248 716062.

HMS Protector: Did you serve on board in the Antarctic? Seeking ex-crew members, all commissions, re-forming an association. Contact Bill Bartlett on 01202 480767.

Kota Maru circa 1945-46: S. Tiffin seeks

anyone who took passage from Philippines to USA in the ship. Contact S. Tiffin, 2, Falconry Ct, 7 Fairfield South, Kingston-on-Thames KT1 2UR, tel: 0181 549 0326.

Ex-HMS Wessex RNR: meets first Wednesday in month, 8pm at the Seafarers, Orchard Place, Southampton. Details from Mrs J. Bull, 44, Mayfair Gardens, Court Rd, Banister Park, Southampton SO15 2TW.

Bill McMullan, PO Writer at Portsmouth, mid-60s before being drafted to Fontenbleu, wife's name Deirdre (Dee). Peter, son of RPO Dennis Burley, wife's name Win, drafted to Singapore 1965, wants to hear from you. Contact Peter Burley, 27, Stifford Rd, Aveley, Essex RM15 4BS, tel: 01708 680451.

HMS Edinburgh Castle: Reg Howard, SBA in 1940, seeks Sick Berth staff, especially Albert Sumner, Sid Jenkins, Bob Watkinson, Checkley, Chedsley and others. Contact Reg at 1, Kesteven Drive, Market Deeping, Lincs PE6 8DU, tel: 01778 346813.

HMS Mercury – March 1959, Class R20/21: Were you in either class, and interested in contacting old classmates? Contact Jim (Jock) Pollock, 01609 775023, 01609 766003, e-Mail: james.pollock@bt.com

HMS Raleigh, Mess 84: Ken Lawley seeks mates in a photo taken Nov 8, 1943, especially Arthur Brown, of Stockwell, London (1956). Contact Ken at 38, Greenfield Rd, Waverton, Cheshire CH3 7NG.

HMS Saintes 55/56, HMA Armada 56/57: Ron Miles (ex A/B and ship's postie), of 23 Swale Rd, Cove, Farnborough GU14 9NH, tel: 01252 663330, seeks shipmates.

RNH Haslar, 1950-56: Geoff (Tubby)

Richardson seeks chums Don (Jock) Smart, Keith (Hotfoot) Nicholls or others. Contact Geoff at 3, St Monica's Garth, Easingwood, York YO61 3GZ, tel: 01347 821642.

HMS Whitesand Bay: Seeking Jeff Steed and Tom King, 1952-54. Contact Den Herbert, 54, Sara Close, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield B74 4BW.

HMS Penn: Is there anyone left who served in this destroyer? Is there an association? Tom Sawyer was aboard for the second commission. Contact Tom at 15, Overfield Rd, California, Birmingham B32 3BA, tel: 0121 426 2417.

Fred Cork, member of CFVA and HMS St Vincent Association: contact Gordon Chatburn (01705 262964) or 49, Maralyn Ave, Waterlooville, Portsmouth PO7 7LL; re ML1323, attacked in Pearl River Sept, 1953; Gordon has photo of her in Hong Kong after being towed back by HMS Cossack.

LCIL 215: Frank Smith wants to contact mates who took part in the surrender of the Japanese at Singapore and the handing over of boats to US Navy at Subic Bay. Write to 1, Dalriada Rd, Greenock, PA16 0RB.

■ Material submitted for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed, and addressed to The Editor.

■ Entries are free, but repeat items can only be inserted on payment of our run-on advertising rate – contact 023 9272 5062.

■ Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.

■ Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot always be met.

■ There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.

Reunions

November

HMS Trafalgar Association reunion is Nov 13 at the Home Club, Portsmouth. All commissions welcome with guests. Details from Albert Senior, Hill Farm, Great Dunham,

PROFESSIONAL TOURIST GUIDE available to advise you on your accommodation and reunion needs around Plymouth. Guided tours also available. Contact TOP TOURS, Tel. (01752) 695451, OR Mobile 07974967821.

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Over to You

Galley-baked bread competition: Can anyone tell D. Atkinson what happened to the Oak shield awarded to the winner? His name was added in 1958 to the others dating back to 1932. If possible he would like a photo of the shield and a close up of his name on it. Contact D H Atkinson, 15, George Downing House, Miles Mitchell Village, Crownhill, Plymouth PL6 5XJ, tel: 01752 779596.

Frederick Jack Bishop, Capt RN (decd): Can anyone tell T. Foreman the whereabouts of Capt Bishop's daughter, Pauline Jane Bishop, born Malta, July 10, 1946. Contact T Foreman, c/o 56, Chequer Ave, Hyde Park, Doncaster DN4 5AS.

'Old Horse, old horse, what want you here?' is the first line to a verse Ursula Bodilly's father, the late Cdr Ralph Bodilly, used to quote when in her teens and complaining about food. What is the history of it? Contact Miss Bodilly at Flat 2, Trenarren, 8 Alverton Terrace, Penzance TR18 4JH.

HMS Antrim: Does anyone know where Miss Turner can purchase a Zippo lighter with the Antrim crest on it? Contact Miss S. Turner, 41, Leegomery Rd, Wellington,

Telford TF1 3BN, tel: 01952 249169.

Pythons: Can anyone provide Len Warren with details of the sinking of German supply ship Python by HMS Dorsetshire on Dec 6, 1941, in the South Atlantic. Contact Len at 46, Mill Lodge, Llandegfan, Anglesey LL59 5YB, tel: 01248 716062.

HMS Powerful: G. Meakin has a silver Hunter watch with the inscription 'Siege of Ladysmith, 188 Days 1899-1900, H Pannifer Ord. Seaman, HMS Powerful'. The dial is signed S. Smith & Sons, The Strand, London. Watchmakers to the Admiralty. Any info would be gratefully received. Contact G.W. Meakin, 5, The Hollows, Silverdale Estate, Wilford, Nottingham NG11 7FJ.

Chatham Command Field Gun Crew: A. Hussey was a member of this crew in 1960, the last time Chatham competed. Anyone with photos or film of Chatham at Earl's Court in 1960 is asked to contact Mr Hussey at 10c, King William Walk, Greenwich, SE10 9JH.

HMS Firedrake: Colin Masters' uncle was lost, aged 19, when the ship was torpedoed and sunk in WWII. He wants to find out more about the ship and survivors. Contact Colin Masters, 51, Pantain Rd, Loughborough, LE11 3LZ, tel: 01509 234304.

HMS Vortigern, lost March 15, 1942. George Tweedy, of Toronto, seeks info about his father, Tommy Tweedy, Stoker 1st Class, who died with his ship, and wants to hear from survivors or relatives, especially if they knew his father. Contact his cousin, W. Neale, 3, Grange Close, North Shields NE30 3AD, tel: 0191 296 1641.

F.J. Hawkin, Jan 2, 1920, HMS Commonwealth is written on the back of two framed, B/W prints of country scenes. If anyone knows of the prints or Hawkin, contact Mrs Sheila Elliott, The Red Lion, 14, The Square, Beaminster, Dorset DT8 3AX, tel: 01308 862364.

Fast Minelayers Association, South East Branch: Reunion at the RBLC Kennington at noon on Nov 29. Contact Ray Moore, 89 Watling Rd, Norwich NR7 9TG, tel: 01603 437652.

December

RN Shipwrights and Artisans reunion (serving and retired) on Dec 3 between noon and 4.30 at the Royal British Legion Club, Market Rd, Plympton. Call Mark Allen on 01752 338588 or Bob Johnson on 01752 793143.

Seaman Specialist Comrades Association Christmas function in the WO & SR Mess, HMS Nelson, on Dec 4, 8pm. Details from SSCA Secretary, 21, Merrivale Rd, Hilsa, Portsmouth PO2 0TJ.

January

Quarters Administrators (ex-Assistants) reunion will be in the WO's, SR's and SNCO's Mess, HMS Nelson, on Jan 22. More details from CPWOQA Paula Price 01705 722775 or POWQA Chrissy Smith on 01705 726706.

Operation Grapple 1957-58: Seeking David Henderson, Charles Allison and Austin Jones, all HMNZS Rotoiti, who served at Christmas Island. Contact Fred Hansen, 35, Glen Rd, Devonport, Auckland, New Zealand, tel: (09) 4452 178, fax: (09) 4457 829.

HMS Edinburgh Castle: Reg Howard was a SBA during 1941-42. He seeks info on SBCPO Sid Lee and SBO Robert Brown, both Guz ratings. Bob was later Commissioned Wardmaster at CSH Trincomalee. Contact Reg Howard, 1 Kesteven Drive, Market Deeping, Lincs PE6 8DU, tel: 01778 346813.

War Registry, The Admiralty: Ray Sibley, who was in 'B' Watch at the Registry during the War, wants to hear from anyone else who served in the hub of Naval Ops. Write to Ray, c/o Irene Chalmers, 630, Queens Drive, Swindon, Wilts SN3 1AZ.

Lighthouses or Light Vessels: Peter Williams is researching major incidents such as the collision between a minesweeper – which one? – and the Scarweather Light Vessel on Jan 30, 1940, which resulted in the light vessel sinking, also the many personal anecdotes about the rescue of sick or injured keepers. Contact Peter Williams, 1 Marine Gdns, Milford Haven SA73 3JH, tel: 01646 698825, e-mail: ldlight@globalnet.co.uk

HMS Voltaire, sunk by surface raider in Mid-Atlantic, April 4, 1941. George Thomas (25 Kingsfield, Kingsway, Bath, BA2 2NB, 01225 310588) would like to hear from anyone who knew his uncle, Harry Thomas, who went down with the ship.

HMS Capel: Gerard Leonard is compiling info on the sinking of HMS Capel (Lt B.G. Heslop) on December 26, 1944. Also the sinking of German ship Komat on October 14, 1942 by MTB 236 (S/Lt R. Drayson). This action involved five destroyers from Dartmouth, one of which may have had Lt Col J.C.A. Ingram serving aboard. Any photos will be copied and returned. Contact Gerard at 102 rue Jean Lebas, 50120 Equerdeville-Hainneville, France.

Lt David Benson RNVR: Margaret Dent seeks info about her father, who served in WW2 in HMS Andradite and MMS 113 in the Med. Particularly interested in the occasion when he took the surrender of a Greek island as acting Lt Cdr – does anyone remember the incident or the island? Contact Mrs Dent, 45, Herschell Rd, Leigh on Sea SS9 2NH.

HMS Foxhound - U39: A crew member of U39, rescued by members of Foxhound and other corvettes after an unsuccessful attack on Ark Royal on Sept 14, 1939, wishes to contact sailors from Foxhound. Contact Erwin Prugel, Hemminger Strasse 12, 71254, Ditzingen, Germany.

Wilfred (Bill or Will) E Smith, RM, served in HMS Goliath, HMS Calypso, President III. Died 1942 in Gibraltar Hospital. Does anyone remember Mrs M Luckett's dad? Contact her at Flat 4, Rosebay Close, Norwich NR6 6DX, tel: 01603 403006.

HMS Magic, WWII fleet minesweeper, sunk off Normandy, July 6-7th, 1944, by a German human torpedo. Having served in sweepers during WWII, sentimental reasons prompt C. Winter to seek a print of Magic. Contact him at 95, Thomas St, East Brighton 3187, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

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de Havilland Sea Vampire

ON DECEMBER 3 1945 a Sea Vampire became the first pure jet to operate from an aircraft carrier.

Piloted by Lt Cdr E. M. Brown RNVR, the converted third prototype Vampire I went on to complete 15 take-offs and landings over two days. Although propeller-driven aircraft would continue to serve for many years to come, it was the tentative start of an era for the Fleet Air Arm.

The navalised production version of the Vampire FB5 – the F20 – was strengthened, fitted with arrestor hooks at the rear of the engine nacelle and had larger dive brakes and landing flaps. The type equipped three squadrons involved with the training of the Service's first generation of jet pilots – 700, 702 and 787.

An experimental version, the F21, had strengthened undersides for trials in 1949 on

board the carrier HMS Warrior, to test the feasibility of landing aircraft without the use of undercarriages! In an attempt to soften the impact, Warrior was specially equipped with a rubberised surface on her flight deck. The idea did not catch on.

The F20 was powered by a de Havilland Goblin 2 engine producing 3,000lb thrust. Maximum speed was 526mph, it could climb to 25,000ft in ten minutes and had a range of 590 miles. Armament was four 20mm guns.

It was succeeded in the training role by the two-seat Sea Vampire T22 in 1954, a navalised version of the RAF's T11. Seventy-four were delivered to the RN and were used widely. Most had gone out of service by the late 1950s but a few remained in secondary roles until the mid 1960s.

The T22 was powered by a Goblin 35 engine giving a maximum speed of 538mph.



Sport - Rugby Special



Strategy is dependent on youths

THE RNRU'S commitment to youth rugby is central to the strategy of 'Club Navy'.

A new chairman of youth rugby, Capt David Pond, is heading up a strong management team, and he will sit on the RNRU executive committee, giving youth a voice in the senior forum.

The Under-21s will play all their fixtures before Christmas, culminating with the Army match on December 11, while the Under-20s will play in a new RFU U20 county competition between January and April 2000, and hopes are high that both sides will be the equal of some stiff opposition.

Within the 'Club Navy' system, individuals with the talent and desire can look forward to early recognition and fast-stream selection to the senior sides.

Services XVI

DEVONPORT Services will be fielding 16 teams this season with the launch of a veterans' team.

Services start the season in the Cornwall and Devon League, and run a women's team - the Sirens - as well as a range of junior sides.

Bowl victors

COMMANDO Logistics proved too well-organised for 42 Cdo, taking the 50th rugby Argyll Bowl.

A 22-9 half-time lead was beginning to slip but a late rally made the final score 34-19.



● Reaching out - action from the 1999 RN v RAF clash.

RN rugby reaches to future

NAVY rugby has had to undergo the same radical changes which the civilian side of the sport has experienced, said RN Rugby Union chairman Jeff Blackett.

The traditions of 150 years, with constant fixture lists and a powerful elite, has been replaced by professional players and leagues.

And although the Navy still has Wednesday rugby, and the annual trek to Twickenham to play the Army, the revolution has not passed it by, he said.

But the evolution must continue, to ensure the Navy - through players, coaches, referees and administrators, in both military and civilian spheres - still punches above its weight.

To maintain the influence, the chairman wants to see the RNRU continue to be a model constituent body, supporting rugby throughout at all levels.

Areas of importance include:
■ Permanent RM units and establishments must ensure they continue to run as properly-constituted RFU clubs;
■ All players must be registered on the

RNRU data base;

■ RN/RM leagues and cup competitions should feed into RFU national competitions

■ RN representative teams should compete in the county championships

■ More resources should be put into US Portsmouth and Devonport Services, to help them progress up the national leagues to provide a focus for players;
■ Close links should be built with National first and second division clubs, to place and develop players;
■ More resources should be put into youth development.

The chairman still believes Navy rugby is well-respected in the RFU, but the grass-roots level - the Wednesday teams - must play their part.

"My vision for the next decade is that the RNRU must provide an environment for all our people to play rugby whenever and wherever they wish, with a facility for those who have aspirations to play as high a level as possible.

"This must all be underpinned by good administration, a sound financial basis, and a voice in the national arena."

Women's game is growing

WOMEN'S rugby is the fastest-growing sport in Europe, and last season - by popular demand - became an integral part of RN rugby.

Devonport Sirens - an open club with about 30 players, around ten of whom are serving - has shown how successful such a squad can be, and forms the nucleus of an embryonic Navy team.

US Portsmouth is not so advanced, but at both centres there are training and coaching opportunities, and for those who want a gentler introduction there is a growing tag rugby circuit. Faslane is also tasked with developing women's rugby.

Those interested should contact LWPT Kieran Walker (US Portsmouth): 9380 24151; George Taylor (Sirens): 93705 3559 or Lt Sian Howells (Sec, RNW Rugby): 9375 52838.

Navy XIII lose

THE NAVY lost 34-18 to the RAF the final match of the inter-Services rugby league challenge cup.

A tough first half saw the RAF edge in front by 10-6, but the Navy, having lost influential skipper Andy Steel to injury, were ground down after the break.

'Club Navy' is the new ethos

IF YOU are good enough, you are in the First XV.

That is the simple selection policy which is at the heart of the 'Club Navy' concept, according to Cdr Chris Alcock, Director Navy Rugby.

Cdr Alcock's remit is to oversee the playing side of Navy rugby, including selecting the Navy team.

His aim is also simple: "To put Navy rugby back at the very top, not just at First XV level but for all the Naval Service.

"Producing a winning side at Twickenham on May 6, 2000, is

my target, and this will occupy most of my time, as success at that level will benefit all involved in Navy rugby," he said.

Club Navy as a concept is described thus: "All teams will feed the First XV, from the smallest MCM in refit or a deployed rifle company, to those playing their trade in the Allied Dunbar Premiership."

A cohesive Navy structure means talent can be spotted and nurtured early, and coaching strategies and techniques will be common right through the system.

Even more than just a match ...

THE SUCCESS of this year's Army v Navy match - apart from the result - shows that the policy of attracting larger crowds is well on course.

The attendance of 28,500 - 20 per cent more than 1998 - meant the plan to realise a capacity crowd by 2002 is still on track.

And as the game grows, and the type of spectator is changing, so the organising committee has made a conscious decision to appeal to families and neutrals, reflected in the extensive advertising campaign and its catchline: "More than just a rugby match ..."

In line with that policy, the first match of the new millennium, on May 6, will feature a full range of supporting events, including England Students v Combined Services U21s, an Under-16s penalty-kicking competition, and the national U12s tournament final.

There will also be a range of displays and activities around the ground, and there are plans for a helicopter abseiling demonstration.

Tickets, available in the New Year, will be £12.50 for adults and £5 for children. Group discounts are available. Watch for advertisements in Navy News.

Veterans catching up

AN UPSURGE in veterans rugby has encouraged the start of an inter-Services championship - but the Navy has some catching up to do.

The Army - the current champions - and RAF are both pressing on with squad development, and the Veterans Committee is seeking players over 35 for the championships and two warm-up games.

For those who need an update on the rules, and to rediscover past

fitness levels, Devonport Services and US Portsmouth run regular veterans fixtures and welcome enthusiastic members.

So break out the liniment, dub the boots and call the Veterans contacts: Lt Cdr Grassy Meadows (FONA HQ, ext 5494); WO Soapy Watson (HMS Drake ext 68302); CPO Pat Patilla (HMS Excellent ext 7071) and CPOPT Ivan Torpy (HMS Neptune ext 5308).

Take up the whistle

PLAYERS coming to the end of their careers, or who are injured, or non-players with an interest in the game - the game needs you!

Referees are a vital element of Navy rugby, and the RN has its own society of referees, closely aligned to the Combined Services Rugby Referees.

The benefits are joining the camaraderie, staying closely involved with the game, and possibly officiating at a higher standard than that at which the individual played.

The society runs foundation courses, which set you on a ladder to the highest levels - two society referees officiate in the Allied Dunbar League.

To find out more about the society, contact the secretary, Lt Cdr John Large, on 0121 606 5071.

■ The next RN First XV fixture is against Devon at the Rectory on November 29. For a full list of fixtures, see next month's Navy News.

Area contacts

THE RNRU Commands and Competitions organisation exists to nurture grass-roots rugby in the Navy.

Currently headed by Lt Col John Leigh RM, the Command/Area representatives are:

SCOTLAND: Lt J. Hawkes, Faslane

FLEET: Lt Cdr T. Kenealy, HMS Teme-raire

NAVAL AIR COMMAND: WOEA(M) K. Dev-

onald, RNAS Yeovilton

WOMEN: Lt Cdr P. Rowe, BRNC

PLYMOUTH: Lt K. Northcote, HMS Drake

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Royals tame the Dragons

ROYAL Marines proved their boat-handling capability in the Dragon Boat National Cup competition.

The RM Dragon Boat Club's ladies and junior teams made their debuts alongside crews in the Open class and Scratch competition, and the club bagged two wins.

Hunter Troop – for recruits regaining fitness following injury – only had three hours' training, but retained their Scratch title by winning both 250m and 500m races.

The Open crew managed seventh and eighth places out of 32, despite the handicap of having two paddlers missing.

In the ladies' event, a fourth place in their first appearance was judged a fine performance.

And to round off a good showing, the junior crew won five of their six races, and were declared the best junior crew in England.

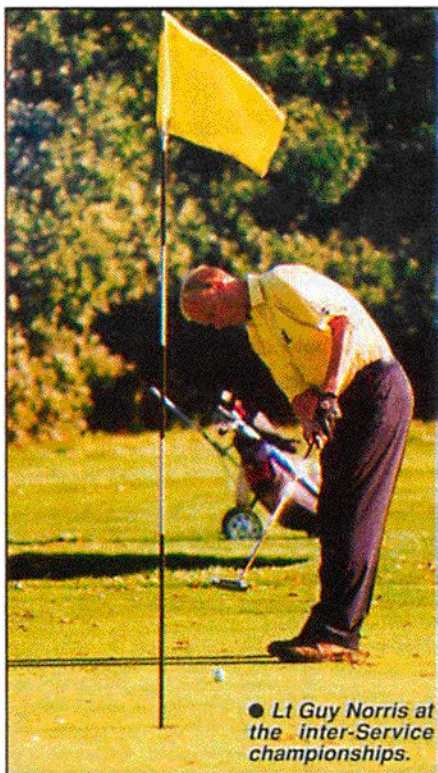
Anyone interested in taking up the sport should contact the UPTI at CTCRM, C/Sgt Dave Tennison, on ext 4452.

Uplifting result

A PERSONAL best by Navy weightlifter Simon Mansell at the West of Scotland championships brought him a British qualifying total of 202.5kg in the 105+ class – only 2.5kg short of the European mark for the 40-45 age group, his next target.

Simon's performance brought him nine more Cornwall and South West records, bringing his current tally to 24.

Close battle for Services golf title



● Lt Guy Norris at the inter-Service championships.

THE INTER-SERVICE golf championships finished all-square – but under new rules the Army took the title on individual game wins, writes *Cdr Gary Skinnis*.

The first day of the event, sponsored by Data General and played at Little Aston, saw the Navy take on reigning champions the RAF.

RN players faltered on the final holes, with just half a point coming from individual champion Lt Guy Norris (810 NAS) and MA Scott Gilbert (RH Haslar).

The Navy won the first three singles through Norris, Lt Cdr Darryl Whitehead (HMS Invincible) and C/Sgt Bill Parker (847 NAS), and debutant PO Kevin Thornton (RNAS Culdrose) lost on the final green.

But the fight-back could not be maintained, and with only one more win (from Gilbert), the Navy went down by three points.

On Day 2, Norris and Thornton won and Gilbert and Lt Steve Roberts (HMS Sultan) halved to leave the Army a point ahead.

Singles wins by Norris, Thornton and Lt Cdr Peter Smith (DECA Boscombe Down), with halves from Whitehead and Cdr Ian Yuill (AFPAA Insworth) meant the final match was a decider, but Gilbert reached the 18th green one up, and displayed nerves of steel to hole a long putt and clinch victory.

On the final day the Army reached the requisite 7.5 points against the RAF to win the title.

The championship marked a considerable success for an under-strength Navy team. Norris is proving a worthy RN champion, beating both other Service aces, and he will captain the Combined Services team to South Africa this month. He will be joined by Gilbert, Whitehead and Cpl Chris Graham (RMR Bristol).

Yuill's appearance was a landmark in Service sport, as he gained a record 19th inter-Service cap.

Five of the RN team were joined by S/Lt Alex Johnson (RAF Shawbury) for the Cornish Piskey at Newquay, and although they lost in the second round, they won the consolation event.

In the ladies' inter-Service competition, the RN team – cut from ten to six by injury and other commitments – were up against it.

The Army won by a comfortable 7-2 margin, with Cdr Moira Hoath (AFPAA Centurion)/POWWTR Riz Davies (HMS Excellent) notching a win, and Navy number one Hoath and POWAEM Jo Marshall (HMS Seahawk) halving their singles.

Hoath and Davies again won their four-some against holders and eventual champions the RAF, and spirited singles brought the RN two points, with Hoath and POWDH Pam Jack (HMS Neptune) winning.

Surfing's up in RN/RM club

INTEREST in surfing is high, with nearly 200 Service and MOD personnel attending beginners weekends and 100 competing through the RN/RM Boardriders Club.

The club started the season by finishing fourth in the British Inter-Club championships, gaining selection for England in the European club competition, where they achieved a respectable seventh place.

A total of 42 competitors entered the RN Open championships:

Open: 1. Mne Dave Ryan (RM Chivenor); 2. Mne Charlie Jameson (RM Chivenor); 3. LMEM Mark Raspison (HMS Raleigh); **Longboard division:** 1. Mne Dave Ryan; 2. NA Richie Turrell (HMS Seahawk); 3. LAEM Si Parry (HMS Heron).

The club expressed thanks to Cdr Brian Davies (A/DNPTS) and Bill Rosewall (Lottery Manager) for their assistance.

A Level 1 Instructors course has been organised for Sennen Cove near Penzance on December 3-5, and a Beach Lifeguards course will be held in March or April.

Further details of these courses, or about surfing in general, are available from POPT Mike Murphy at the Sports Centre, RNAS Culdrose.

Team falls in the final

A COMBINED Services polo team featuring Cdr Richard Mason (FOSF – pictured in white) lost in the final of the inaugural British Forces Foundation tournament.

Six teams – five professional – competed in the event, to raise funds for top-class showbusiness performers to entertain Service personnel on operations around the world.

■ RN polo player OM Grant Fraser captained a Combined Services polo team on tour to Singapore which was disrupted by heavy rain. The only match went to the home side 6-2.

Picture: LA(PHOT) Brad Bradbury.

In brief

Gold for Navy rider

A RARE appearance by a Navy rider helped the British team to victory in a five-way international military equestrian competition at Sandhurst.

S/Lt Mark Hammon (HMS Newcastle) was the first RN rider in the event since it started in 1976, and helped the team to a gold medal despite only meeting his mount, Tunis, for the first time at the event. The horse is more often seen on duty at Horse Guards in London.

Opponents are rocked

THE ROYAL Navy team, led by LPT Micky Breed, has won a hard-fought inter-Services (Gibraltar) badminton championships, finishing three points ahead of the Army and five ahead of the RAF, who ended with 18 points.

Remembrance match

THE COMBINED Services rugby XV play the Barbarians in the annual Remembrance Match on Tuesday November 9 at Kingsholm, home of Gloucester RFC.

The match, sponsored by Lambert Fenchurch UK Group Ltd, raises money for the Royal British Legion, and stands as a memorial tribute to those Service personnel, particularly rugby players, who died on active service.

The game kicks off at 7pm, and tickets for what should be a feast of open rugby cost £10 (stand) and £5 (ground). The ticket hotline is 01452 381087.

1,2 and 3 for 45 Cdo

ROYAL Marines figured among the honours at the British biathlon championships at Aviemore, with 45 Commando winning the relay – beating the British National squad – and Mne Brian Cole, of 45 Cdo, finishing third overall to enhance his Olympic hopes.

Cole also finished second in the 5km sprint, pushing colleague Mne Martin Blackley into third place.

Referees pay a visit

SOUTH African referee Marius Jonker officiated at a rugby match between HMS Collingwood and HMS Invincible as part of an international exchange programme which saw the RN's Lt Cdr Geraint Ashton-Jones visit Natal earlier this year.

Marius and two compatriots are refereeing at all levels during their visit, and visited HM ships Invincible and Victory while hosted by Combined Services referees.

Last chance courses

COURSES of instruction for cricket umpires and scorers will be held at HMS Temeraire from February 7-9. This is the last chance for two years, as new laws are introduced late next year.

To apply for either course, contact Lt Cdr Jim Danks at HMS Temeraire, Burnaby Rd, Portsmouth PO1 2HB, tel 029 9272 2671, or contact POPT Paul Nash on Portsmouth Naval Base ext 23974.

There will be a requirement for pre-course reading.

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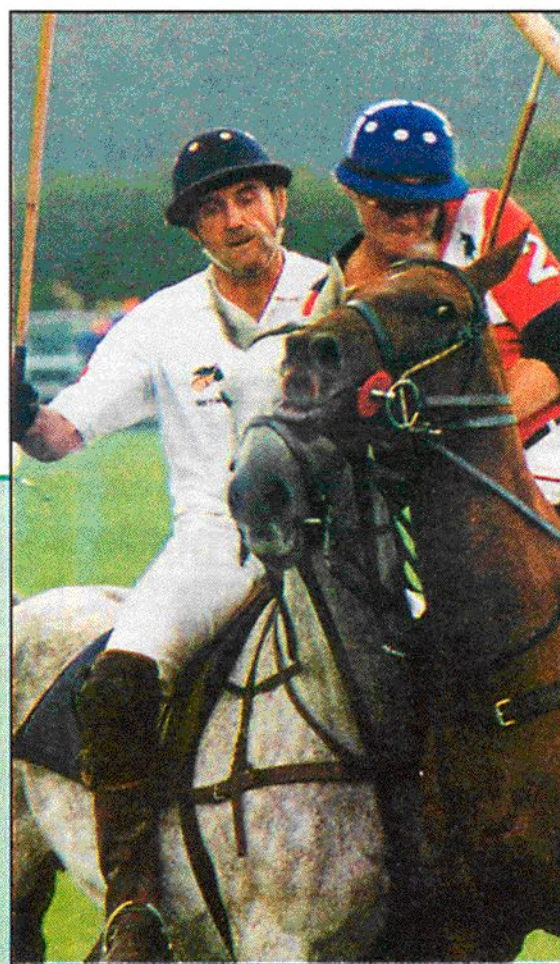
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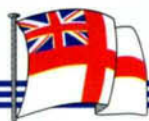
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● Rope work – Capt Anthony Rix, Captain F4, 'pulling off' with the team from HMS Marlborough during the Chain of Command Pull.

Final victory is sweet revenge

THE ROYAL Marines gained revenge over Fleet by reversing last year's scoreline in the inter-Command football championships at Plymouth, writes Lt Cdr Jim Danks.

After a hectic opening both sides settled, and it was slightly against the run of play when Mne Mark Pepperall put his side ahead after 15 minutes.

Crosses from LOM Page (HMS Chatham) were a constant threat to the Royals' defence, but chances went begging and when Fleet did net, after 70 minutes, the goal was

disallowed for a foul.

A delighted Mne Sean Foster accepted the cup from Capt Tall, chairman of the RNFA – the first time the Royals had won it since 1995, when they again beat Fleet in the final.

Fleet had beaten Plymouth 2-1 and drawn 2-2 with Scotland in the group matches, and the RM team beat NAC 1-0 and Portsmouth 5-2 in their group.

Navy manager CPO Neil Frame will have been pleased with the competition as he looks towards retaining the inter-Services title.

In the women's competition,

Portsmouth showed outstanding form to thrash a combined Plymouth, Thames, Royal Marines and QARNNS side 6-1 in the decider, having beaten Air, Fleet, Scotland and outstations 5-2 in the semi-finals.

The Portsmouth team's performance is even more remarkable as they fielded only nine players.

Portsmouth went two goals up, with Lt Sam Donnelly scoring in the 37th minute and Wren Karen Ashton doubling the lead three minutes later.

The combined side pulled one back through POPT Michelle Bowen on the stroke of half-time, but within eight minutes of the restart Ashton had completed a hat-trick, and further strikes from Ashton and Wren Sarah Johnson completed the rout.

For further information on RN women's football, contact PO Ali Fairry on HMS Sultan ext 2346, or PO Elaine David on Portsmouth Naval Base ext 25721 or 25722.

Forthcoming men's fixtures include:

Mon Nov 1 v Oxford University, Iffley Rd, Oxford (ko 1415)

Thurs Nov 11 v English Fire Service, Newquay FC (1400)

Weds Nov 17 v Amateur Football Alliance, Burnaby Rd (1600)

Tues Nov 23 v Dorset, Portland Utd FC (1930).

Supporters are welcome to attend these matches.

Fall guys take medals

NAVY fall guys put up a good display in the Army Parachuting Association championships.

Three RN 4-way teams competed to build formations in 35 seconds after leaving the aircraft.

Best showing came from 4 Noon Glory, the junior team, which won silver in the Army and Open competitions behind the Red Devils.

The intermediate team, 4 Fold, took bronze in the Army competition, and the seniors, 4 Play, just missed out on a podium position.

For Speed 8 the 50 seconds

of work time starts when the first skydiver crosses a line in the aircraft.

The object is to form an eight-way star as quickly as possible, with extra points for additional formations within the time.

Sadly, Gale Force 8 ran out of puff, although a star was formed on each of the six jumps – and the RN avoided last place.

The skydivers were Lts Holmes and Lee, S/Lts Liddle and Paton, CPO Tyler, POs Lambert and Way, LAEMs Brookes and Wheeler, and AEM Campbell.

Boats enter Caribbean

THE three Service yachts were racing through the Caribbean as Navy News went to press.

The penultimate leg of the Transglobe 98 race finishes in St Maarten with everything to play for – and the whole event has been a great success to date.

"We have filled every bunk space on all three yachts, and there has been a good cross-section of experience and novices of both sexes," said Cdr Tim Thorley of the race organising team.

The final run home is due to begin on November 2, ending in Gosport around December 3, and a prize-giving and dance will be held at Greenwich in January.

Navy yacht Adventure won the last leg from Cape Town to Rio, putting her right back in contention.



● Keeping calm – Army yacht Broadsword (red hull) and the Navy's Adventure at the start of Leg 6 in Cape Town.

Grafton stars in frigate olympiad

HMS GRAFTON again proved too strong for the competition during the Fourth Frigate Squadron sports olympiad.

The event was held during the busy period after summer leave, but a good level of participation was achieved, with the emphasis being on fun.

Even HMS Kent was represented, with several members of her fledgling ship's company making it to Portsmouth from Scotland to team up with the Rear Link Office.

Sports on display included five-a-side football – played on a full-size pitch – hockey, volleyball and softball.

The highlight of the day was the Chain of Command tug o'war, which saw Captain

F4, Capt Anthony Rix, pull for HMS Marlborough and the Rear Link Office, only declining to pull when Marlborough pulled off against the Rear Link Office.

HMS Grafton's Commanding Officer, Cdr Bob Sanguinetti, accepted the trophy from Capt Rix for the second year running, and individual prizes were provided by Clive Brown of Varivane Industries.

Capt Rix said: "It was a fantastic day, and I was glad to see so many people participating."

"Hopefully we will be able to have a similar event next year – and I will be allowed to win."

He also thanked the staff of HMS Temeraire for their support.

Sultan takes title at novices boxing night

NOVICE boxers brought in the crowds when HMS Nelson hosted the championships, writes S/Lt Simon Paget.

The bantamweight contest got the evening off to a flying start when MEM Collins, officially the best boxer of the night, stopped his HMS Sultan team-mate MEM Marsland in the first round.

Relentless pressure from OM Wright (HMS Collingwood) in the featherweight division told on MEM Hale (Sultan), who fought gamely but failed to start the third round.

At light-welterweight, OM Taylor (Collingwood) and OM Hardings (HMS Invincible) proved to be well-matched, but it was the former who was awarded the title.

RN man shines in Laser contest

A NAVY man took top place when the RN Sailing Association hosted the inter-Services Laser single-handed championships at Plymouth.

The RAF's Chris Seal and the Navy's Rob Bellfield and Rich Bailey had first-day wins, and in lighter winds on Day 2, Rich Bailey won Race 4, and the RN's Kerry Harris easily took the fifth.

Paul Nicholson (RAF) won the final race to clinch second place overall behind Rich Bailey, with the RAF's Chris Seal third. Bellfield was fourth and Kerry Harris sixth.

The welterweight class proved one-sided, with AEM Butterworth (Sultan) forcing the referee to stop the bout in the second round after OM Hodgson (HMS Dryad) had received two standing counts.

MEM Moss (HMS Invincible) had the edge on skill on the night against AEM Perkins (Sultan), and won a majority points verdict as well as the Best Fleet Boxer title.

The middleweights again proved a great crowd-pleaser, with AEM Gaunt (Sultan) pushing the pace from the start against OM Boucher (Dryad), and Gaunt's left jab gave him a unanimous points win.

The light-heavyweight bout was a toe-to-toe contest, with SES Davies (HMS Manchester) starting at a whirlwind pace against WEA Rae (Collingwood). Although Rae edged his way back,

he eventually lost on points, though he was judged best loser.

LPT Murray (Collingwood) ended the cruiserweight bout in the first round by decking OM Adams (Invincible), and heavy-weight WEA Baker (Collingwood) also saw off his foe, MEM Galpin (Sultan) after an early knock-down and standing count.

The final bout, at super-heavyweight, was also decided by a k.o., with OM Elsworth (Dryad) prevailing over MEM Moore (Sultan).

The winning team was POPT Q Shillingford's Sultan boxers, pipping Collingwood by two points.

Before the show, there were presentations to Mne Kev McCormack, and POPTs Q Shillingford, Dale Randle and Wayne Hodgkinson, for services to the RN Boxing Association.

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Grimsby makes it a home-town commissioning

HMS Grimsby has become the latest Sandown-class minehunter to commission – and she did it in her namesake port.

Joining Grimsby's civic dignitaries and local representatives as guests, were survivors of the wartime HMS Grimsby, a sloop sunk by enemy aircraft off Tobruk in 1941.

Guest of honour was the ship's sponsor, Lady Candy Blackham, wife of the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff, Vice Admiral Sir Jeremy Blackham.

Those present also included Commodore Minewarfare and

Fishery Protection, Commodore Barry Goldman, and the Commanding Officer designate of the First Mine Countermeasures Squadron, Cdr John Murphie.

The commissioning cake was cut by Mrs Christian Lewis – wife of the ship's CO, Lt Cdr Timothy Lewis – and by the vessel's youngest rating, WOM(MW) Andrea Booth.

A ship's company dance was held that evening at the Royal Naval Association Club in Cleethorpes, where a Ceremonial Sunset was conducted by the Royal Marines Corps of Drums and personnel from the Grimsby.

● HMS Grimsby berths at Canary Wharf during her visit to London before commissioning in Grimsby.
Picture: CPO(PHOT) Stu Antrobus



Hoon takes over as Defence Secretary

FORMER Foreign Office Minister Geoff Hoon has taken over as Defence Secretary from Lord Robertson, who has taken up his new role as NATO Secretary General.

Mr Hoon, MP for Ashfield since 1992, was Minister of State in the Lord Chancellor's Department before being appointed to a similar role in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office last May.

He was a Member of the European Parliament for Derbyshire and Ashfield in 1984-94.

GAYS PLEDGE

■ From front page

have not will continue in their duties.

An informal note will be made by Commanding Officers of serving personnel whose homosexuality comes to light, but there will be a suspension of action during which no reference will be made in an individual's record.

Decisions will also be put on hold in the case of applicants to join the Forces who declare their homosexuality. Their applications will neither be rejected nor accepted during the course of the policy review.

Guidance on dealing with cases of homosexuality has been sent to COs and careers officers.



BRIT-ARGIE SEA EXERCISE FIRST SINCE '82 WAR

THE FIRST joint British-Argentine exercise to be held since the Falklands War between the two countries in 1982, was due to be held in the South Atlantic in the first week of November.

The search and rescue exercise comes at a time acknowledged by the Ministry of Defence as important in a programme of defence co-operation between the UK and Argentina.

Among the units due to be involved in the exercise during November 1-4 are the Type 23 frigate HMS Somerset, currently South Atlantic patrol ship, an RAF C-130 Hercules transport aircraft and a Sea King helicopter.

Forces committed by Argentina comprise a Meko-class corvette, a despatch vessel, an Orion P-3 maritime reconnaissance aircraft and an air force Hercules.

The exercise will be run from Argentina's most southerly naval base of Ushuaia in the Cape Horn area. The first two days will be taken up in communications tasks, followed by a search phase over

5,000 square nautical miles of ocean outside Falkland Islands waters.

Three weeks before the start of the exercise, Argentina's Armed Forces Chief, General Carlos Zabala, visited Britain at the invitation of our Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir Charles Guthrie.

The event was seen as a further sign of the increasing warmth in relations between the countries.

General Zabala's programme of visits included the Somerset's sister-ship, HMS Westminster at Portsmouth, and the Permanent Joint HQ at Northwood.

He also laid a wreath at the South Atlantic War Memorial in St Paul's Cathedral.

New museum for Chatham

WORK will soon start on a new museum at Chatham Historic Dockyard, which will tell the story of the base and its workforce from its origins in the days of Henry VIII.

The new gallery, due to be ready by next summer, will cover 25,000sq ft in the Fitted Rigging House and will be one of the dockyard's largest attractions.

On display will be items from the Historic Dockyard collection and from Chatham Dockyard Historical Society.

1817 frigate restored

TRAFALGAR Day was chosen to mark the completion of the restoration work on the hull of the frigate Trincomalee, the oldest British warship afloat.

Built in Bombay in 1817, the painstaking restoration work began in 1990, three years after she was taken to Hartlepool. For 55 years before that she had been based at Portsmouth as the training ship Foudroyant.

The ceremony to mark the end of the ship's transforma-

Two ex-Navy men killed in disasters

TWO ex-Navy ratings died in the train and coach disasters at Paddington and in South Africa respectively.

The standard of Reading branch of the Royal Naval Association was paraded at the funeral at Tilehurst of Michael Hodder (31), one of the train drivers killed in the Paddington crash on October 5.

Mr Hodder served for 12 years up to 1996 in HM ships Danae, Penelope, Hecla and Herald. He leaves a wife and two small children – a son and daughter.

Former RN diver Tony Sparrowe (63) died in the South African coach crash while on holiday with his wife, Jane. It was reported that he had thrown himself across her to protect her.

Mr Sparrowe, a member of the HMS Peacock Association, served throughout the 1950s. He owned a diving company in Hull and has an adult son and daughter.

Mrs Sparrowe returned to UK with her husband's body in mid-October.

Warships free of Millennium Bug

WARSHIPS and submarines operated by the Royal Navy have been declared to be operationally ready for the Millennium – thanks to "unrelenting effort" by Service people and civilians to clear the Millennium Bug.

Armed Forces Minister John Spellar has announced that 96 per cent of systems critical to maintaining defence capability have been tested for the Bug, and where necessary, fixed.

Work on the last few critical systems will be completed by the end of the year.

He said: "These excellent results are the reward of unremitting effort by Service personnel and civilians engaged on one of the largest and most complex Year 2000 programmes in the country."

The MOD will be able to deliver all its services to industry and the public, including prompt payment of bills and the delivery of weather forecasts by the Met Office.

Work to ensure that the Navy's supply chain IT system will not be affected is also nearing completion. However, as a precautionary measure, ships have been told to limit their supply demands to the highest priority in the first 16 days of January, and those deploying in

the New Year have been told to store during December or before.

Work starts on Astute

THE FIRST steel has been cut for the pressure hull of HMS Astute, lead vessel of Britain's new class of attack submarines.

Work by MACL (a Marconi company) has begun on the boat at a factory on the Clyde. The Astute, the largest attack submarine to be built for the Royal Navy, is due to enter service in about six years' time.

Meanwhile, the last of Britain's Trident submarines, HMS Vengeance, has successfully completed her sea trials.

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For example, if you buy a car on a credit agreement and it proves to be faulty, or if you book a flight using a credit card and the airline goes bust, you have an equal right for compensation from the finance company as well as the seller.

However, you only have these rights if the cash price of the goods and services is over £100. They still apply, even though you may only have paid the deposit by credit. These important safeguards come from Section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 and they are called "equal liability" rights.

Credit agreements are where the supplier of the goods or services arranges finance for you with a separate finance company.

You will be asked to sign a written agreement and be given a copy showing the details. If you sign on the trader's premises then the agreement is binding on you once it has been cleared by the finance company.

Even though the trader may say you can cancel a credit agreement, this will not automatically cancel your order for goods or services.

When you sign a credit agreement in your home you get a "cooling off" period. You have five days to change your mind from the time you receive either a second copy of the credit agreement or a separate copy of your cancellation rights. During this time you can cancel the agreement without any penalty.

Credit cards are the most common way of buying on credit and if goods are faulty or services are not as described, then the credit card company are equally liable. If you buy goods abroad, it may be easier to claim against the finance company.

Please note that equal liability

rights do not apply when you buy goods on a charge card as this is not classed as credit.

You do not have equal liability rights when you buy on hire purchase.

This type of finance often tends to be used for the purchase of cars. The garage actually sells the vehicle to a finance company who, as the owner, then hires the car to you for an agreed period of time. You usually pay monthly hire instalments and at the end of the agreement you have an option to buy.

However, you will not become the owner until the last payment has been made.

You will therefore need to refer any complaints about the vehicle to the finance company, not the garage. The same applies if you buy on a conditional sale agreement.

Beware – if you do not keep up payments on a credit agreement, or hire purchase, you will be in breach of contract and the finance company may sue for the outstanding amount.

Also, if you are buying on hire purchase the finance company may repossess the goods.

However, if you have paid more than a third, the finance company will need to obtain a court order first.

You will also need their permission before you sell goods that are still on hire purchase.

□ This information has been provided by Hampshire County Council Regulatory Service. For further advice call 0845 603 0081.

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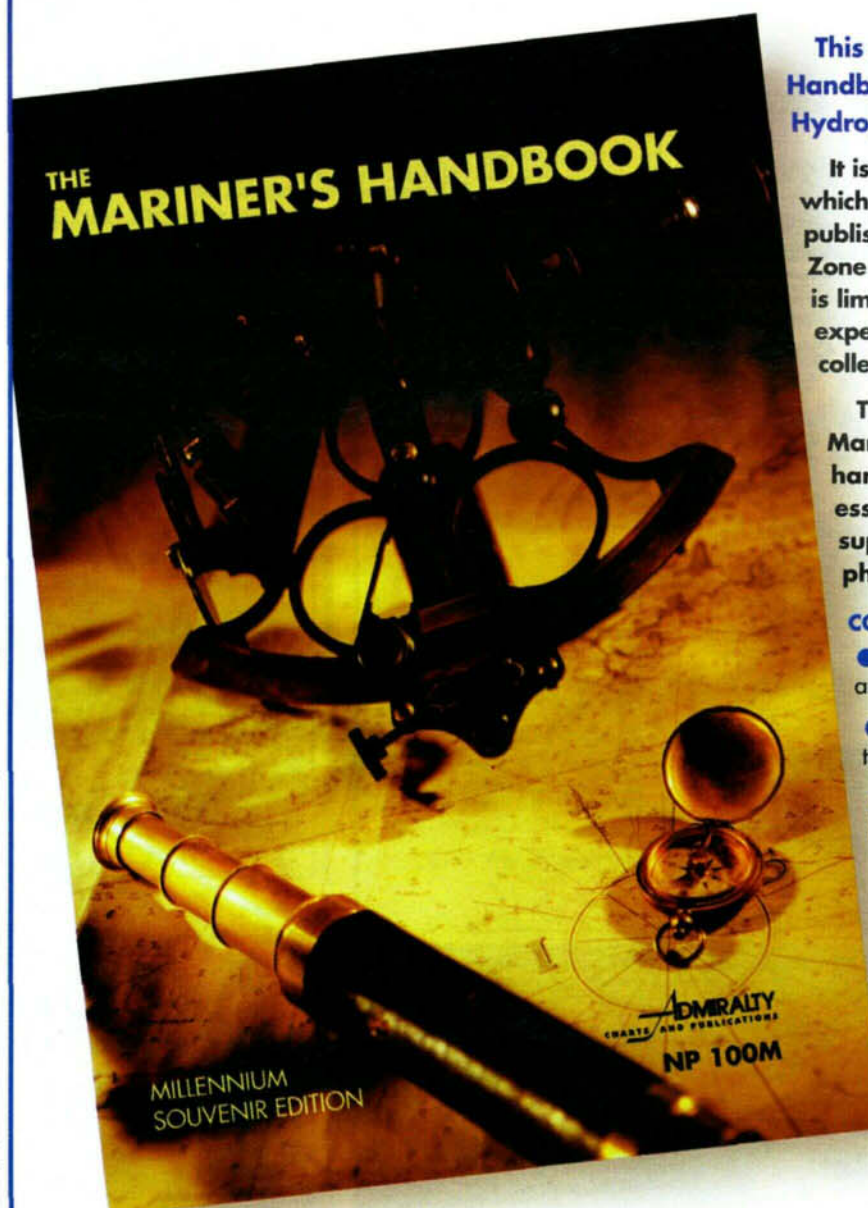
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Britannia wins top tourist accolade

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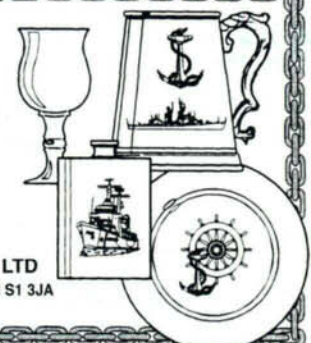


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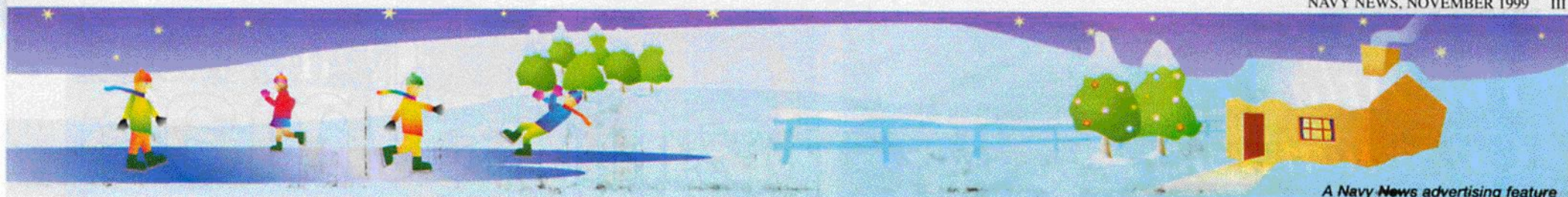
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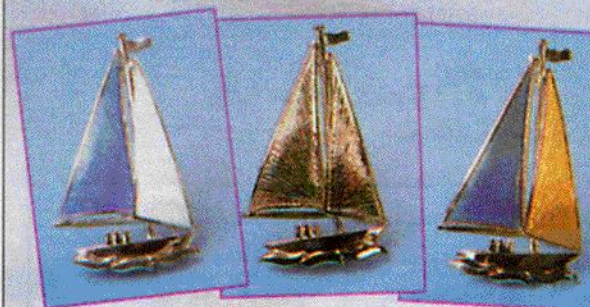
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